LIPPINCOTTS

MONTHRY MAGAZINE

THE HEART OF THE ANCIENT WOOD

CHAS. G. D. ROBERTS

"GREAT BATTLES
OF THE WORLD"

BY

STEPHEN CRANE

A MORMON STORY

"THE ALPINE ROSE"
BY MRS. J. K. HUDSON

FICTION, NEWS, HUMOR, AND POETRY

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

Contents for April, 1900

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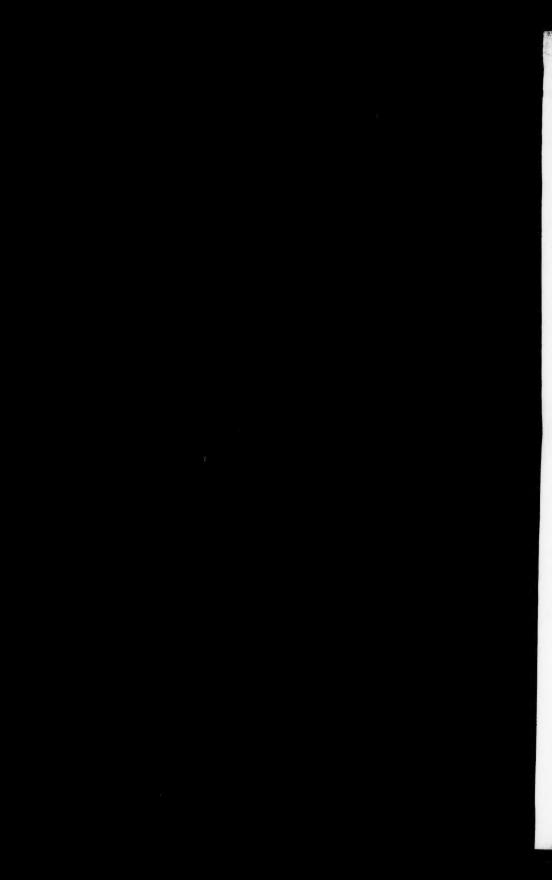
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THE HEART OF THE ANCIENT WOOD

BY

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

AUTHOR OF "THE FORGE IN THE FOREST,"
"A SISTER TO EVANGELINE," ETC.



PHILADELPHIA

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LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

APRIL, 1900



THE HEART OF THE ANCIENT WOOD

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

Author of "The Forge in the Forest," "A Sister to Evangeline," etc.

I

THE WATCHERS OF THE TRAIL.

OT indolently soft, like that which sifts in green shadow through the leafage of a summer garden, but tense, alertly and mysteriously expectant, was the silence of the forest. It was somehow like a vast bubble of glass, blown to a fineness so tenuous that a small sound, were it but to strike the one preordained and mystic note, might shatter it down in loud ruin. Yet it had existed there flawless for generations, transmuting into its own quality all such infrequent and inconsequent disturbance as might arise from the far-off cry of the panther, or the thin chirp of the clambering nut-hatch, the long, solemn calling of the taciturn moose, twice or thrice repeated under the round October moon, or the noise of some great wind roaring heavily in the remote tops of pine and birch and hemlock. Few and slender were the rays of sun that pierced down through those high tops. The air that washed the endless vistas of brown-green shadow was of a marvellous clarity, not blurred by any stain of dust or vapor. Its magical transparency was confusing to an eye not born and bred to it, making the far branches seem near, and the near twigs unreal, disturbing the accustomed perspective, and hinting of some elvish deception in familiar and apparent things.

The trail through the forest was rough and long unused. In spots the mosses and ground-vines had so overgrown it that only the broad scars on the tree-trunks, where the lumberman's axe had "blazed" them for a sign, served to distinguish it from a score of radiating vistas. But just here, where it climbed a long, gradual slope, the run of water down its slight hollow had sufficed to keep its worn stones partly bare. Moreover, though the furrowing steps of man had left it these many seasons untrodden, it was never wholly neglected. A path once fairly differentiated by the successive passings of feet will keep, almost forever, a spell for the persuasion of all that go afoot. The old trail served the flat, shuffling tread of Kroof, the great she bear, as she led her half-grown cub to feast on the blueberry patches far up the mountain. It caught the whim of Ten-Tine, the caribou, as he convoyed his slim cows down to occasional pasturage in the alder-swamps of the slow Quah-Davic.

On this September afternoon, when the stillness seemed to wait wide-eyed, suddenly a cock-partridge came whirring up the trail, alighted on a gnarled limb, turned his outstretched head twice from side to side as he peered with his round beads of eyes, and then stiffened into the moveless semblance of one of the fungoid excrescences with which the tree was studded. A moment more, and the sound of footsteps, of the nails of heavy boots striking on the stones, grew conspicuous against the silence. Up the trail came slouching, with a strong but laborious stride, a large, grizzled man in gray homespuns. His trousers were stuffed unevenly into the tops of his rusty boots; on his head was a drooping, much-battered hat of a felt that had been brown; from his belt hung a large knife in a fur-fringed leather sheath; and over his shoulder he carried an axe, from the head of which swung a large bundle. The bundle was tied up in a soiled patchwork quilt of gaudy colors, and from time to time there came from it a flat clatter suggestive of tins. At one side protruded the black handle of a frying-pan, half wrapped up in newspaper.

Had he been hunter or trapper, Dave Titus would have carried a gun. Or had he been a townsman, a villager, or even an ordinary small country farmer, he would have taken care to be well armed before penetrating a day's journey into the heart of the ancient wood. But being a lumberman, he was neither quite of the forest nor quite of the open. His winters he spent in the very deep of the wilderness, in a log-camp crowded with his mates, eating salt pork, beans, hot bread, and too busy all day long with his unwearying axe to wage any war upon the furred and feathered people. His summers were passed with plough and hoe on a little, half-tilled farm in the Settlement. He had, therefore, neither the desire to kill nor the impulse to fear as he traversed, neutral and indifferent, these silent but not desolated territories.

Not desolated; for the ancient wood was populous in its reserve. Observant, keen of vision, skilled in wood-craft though he was, the grave-faced old lumberman saw nothing in the tranquillity about him save tree-trunks, and fallen, rotting remnants, and mossed hillocks, and thickets of tangled shrub. He noted the difference, not known to

the general eye, between white spruce, black spruce, and fir, between gray birch and yellow birch, between withewood and viburnum; and he read instinctively, by the lichen growth about their edges, how many seasons had laid their disfeaturing touch upon those old scars of the axe which marked the trail. But for all his craft, he thought himself alone. He guessed not of the many eyes that watched him.

In truth, his progress was the focus of an innumerable attention. The furtive eyes that followed his movements were some of them timorously hostile, some impotently vindictive, some indifferent, but all alien: all were at one in the will to remain unseen; so all kept an unwinking immobility, and were swallowed up, as it were, in the universal stillness.

The cock-partridge, a well-travelled bird who knew the settlements and their violent perils, watched with indignant apprehension. Not without purpose had he come whirring so tumultuously up the trail, a warning to the ears of all the wood-folk. His fear was lest the coming of this gray man-figure should mean an invasion of those long, black sticks which went off with smoky bang when they were pointed. He effaced himself till his brown, mottled feathers were fairly one with the mottled brown bark of his perch; but his liquid eye lost not a least movement of the stranger.

The nut-hatch, who had been walking straight up the perpendicular trunk of a pine when the sound of the alien footsteps froze him, peered fixedly around the tree. His eye, a black point of inquiry, had never before seen anything like this clumsy and slow-moving shape, but knew it for something dangerous. His little, slaty head, jutting at an acute angle from the bark, looked like a mere caprice of knot or wood fungus; but it had the singular quality of moving smoothly around the trunk as the lumberman advanced, so as to keep him always in view.

Equally curious, but quivering with fear, two wood-mice watched him intently, sitting under the broad leaf of a skunk-cabbage not three feet from the trail. Their whiskers touched each other's noses, conveying thrills and palpitations of terror as he drew near, drew nearer, came—and passed. But not unless that blind, unheeding heel had been on the very point of crushing them would they have disobeyed the prime law of their tribe, which taught them that to sit still was to sit unseen.

A little further back from the trail, under a spreading tangle of iron-wood, on a bed of tawny moss crouched a tawny hare. His ears lay quite flat along his back. His eyes watched with aversion, not unmixed with scorn, the heavy, tall creature that moved with such effort and such noise. "Never," thought the hare disdainfully, "would he be able to escape from his enemies!" As the delicate current of air

which pulses imperceptibly through the forest bore the scent of the man to the hare's hiding-place, the fine nostrils of the latter worked rapidly with dislike. On a sudden, however, came a waft of other scent; and the hare's form seemed to shrink to half its size, the nostrils

rigidly dilating.

It was the scent of the weasel: to the hare it was the very essence of death. But it passed in an instant; and then the hare's exact vision saw whence it came. For the weasel, unlike all the other folk of the wood, was moving. He was keeping pace with the man, at a distance of some ten feet from the trail. So fitted, however, was his coloring to his surrounding, so shadowlike in its soundless grace was his motion, that the man never discerned him. The weasel's eyes were fixed upon the intruder with a malignancy of hate that might well have seared through his unconsciousness. Fortunately for the big lumberman, the weasel's strength, stupendous for its size, was in no way commensurate with its malice; or the journey would have come to an end just there, and the gaudy bundle would have rested on the trail, to be a long wonder to the mice.

The weasel presently crossed the yet warm scent of a mink, whereupon he threw up his vain tracking of the woodman and turned off in disgust. He did not like the mink, and wondered what that fish-eater could be wanting so far back from the water. He was not afraid exactly,—few animals know so little of fear as the weasel,—but he kept a small shred of prudence in his savage little heart; and he knew that the mink was scarcely less ferocious than himself, while nearly thrice his size.

From the mossy crotch of an old ash-tree, slanting over the trail, a pair of pale yellow-green eyes, with fine black slits for pupils, watched the traveller's march. They were set in a round, furry head, which was pressed flat to the branch and partly overhung it. The pointed, tufted ears lay flat back upon the round brown head. Into the bark of the branch four sets of razor-edged claws dug themselves venomously: for the wild-cat knew, perhaps through some occult communication from its far-off domesticated kin of hearth and door-sill, that in man he saw the one unvanquishable enemy to all the folk of the wood. He itched fiercely to drop upon the man's bowed neck, just where it showed, red and defenceless, between the gaudy bundle and the rim of the brown hat. But the wild-cat, the lesser lynx, was heir to a ferocity well tempered with discretion; and the old lumberman slouched onward unharmed, all ignorant of that green gleam of hate playing upon his neck.

It was a very different gaze which followed him from the heart of a little colony of rotting stumps, in a dark hollow near the trail. Here in the cool gloom sat Kroof, the bear, rocking her huge body contem-

platively from side to side on her haunches, and occasionally slapping off a mosquito from the sensitive tip of her nose. She had no cub running with her that season, to keep her busy and anxious. For an hour she had been comfortably rocking, untroubled by fear or desire or indignation; but when the whirring of the cock-partridge gave her warning, and the grating of the nailed boots caught her ear, she had stiffened instantly into one of the big brown stumps. Her little red eyes followed the stranger with something like a twinkle in them. She had seen men before; and she neither actively feared them nor actively disliked them. Only, averse to needless trouble, she cared not to intrude herself on their notice; and therefore she obeyed the custom of the wood, and kept still. But the bear is far the most human of all the furry wood-folk, the most versatile and largely tolerant, the least enslaved by its surroundings. It has an ample sense of humor also, that most humane of gifts; and it was with a certain relish that Kroof recognized in the gray-clad stranger one of those loud axemen from whose camp, far down by the Quah-Davic, she had only last winter stolen certain comforting rations of pork. Her impulse was to rock again with satisfaction at the thought; but that would have been out of keeping with her present character as a decaying stump, and she restrained herself. She also restrained a whimsical impulse to knock the gaudy bundle from the stranger's back with one sweep of her great paw, and see if it might not contain many curious and edifying things, if not even pork. It was not till she had watched him well up the trail and fairly over the crest of the slope that, with a deep, non-committal grunt, she again turned her attention to the mosquitoes, which had been learning all the tenderness of a bear's nose.

These were but a few of the watchers of the trail, whose eyes, themselves unseen, scrutinized the invader of the ancient wood. Each step of all his journey was well noted. Not so securely and unconsideringly would he have gone, however, had he known that only the year before there had come a pair of panthers to occupy a vacant lair on the neighboring mountain-side. No, his axe would have swung free, and his eyes would have scanned searchingly every overhanging branch; for none better knew than old Dave Titus how dangerous a foe was the tawny northern panther. But just now, as it chanced, the panther pair were hunting away over in the other valley, the low, dense-wooded valley of the Quah-Davic.

As matters stood, for all the watchers that marked him, the old lumberman walked amid no more imminent menace than that which glittered down upon him from four pairs of small, bright eyes high up among the forking limbs of an old pine. In a well-hidden hole, as in a nursery window, were bunched the smooth heads of four young squirrels, interested beyond measure in the stranger animal plodding so heavily below them. Had they been Settlement squirrels they would without doubt have passed shrill comments, more or less uncomplimentary, for the squirrel loves free speech. But when he dwells among the folk of the ancient wood he, even he, learns reticence; and, in that neighborhood, if a young squirrel talks out loud in the nest the consequences which follow have a tendency to be final. When the old lumberman had passed out of their range of view, the four little heads disappeared into the musky brown depths of the nest and talked the event over in the smallest of whispers.

As the lumberman journeyed, covering good ground with his long, slouching stride, the trail gradually descended through a tract where moss-grown bowlders were strewn thick among the trees. Presently the clear green-brown of the mid-forest twilight took a pallor ahead of him, and the air began to lose its pungency of bark and mould. Then came the flat, soft smell of sedge; and the trees fell away; and the traveller came out upon the shores of a lake. Its waters were outspread pearly white from a fringe of pale-green rushes, and the opposite shore looked black against the pale, hazy sky. A stone-throw beyond the sedge rose a little, naked island of black rock, and in the sheen of water off its extremity there floated the black, solitary figure of a loon.

As the lumberman came out clear of the trees and the gaudy colors of his bundle caught its eye, the bird sank itself lower in the water, till only its erect neck and the wedge-shaped head were in view. Then, opening wide its beak, it sent forth its wild peal of inexplicable and disconcerting laughter, an affront to the silence, but a note of monition to all the creatures of the lake. The loon had seen men before and despised them, and found pleasure in proclaiming the scorn. It despised even the long, black sticks that went off with smoky bang when pointed; for had it not learned, in another lake near the Settlement, to dive at the flash and so clude the futile pellets that flew from the stick?

The lumberman gave neither a first nor a second thought to the loon at all, but quickened his pace in the cheerful open. The trail now led some way along the lake-side, till the shore became higher and rougher, and behind a cape of rock a bustling river emptied itself, carrying lines of foam and long ripples far out across the lake's placidity. From the cape of rock towered a bleak, storm-whitened rampike, which had been a pine-tree before the lightning smote it. Its broken top was just now serving as the perch of a white-headed eagle. The great bird bent fierce yellow eyes upon the stranger,—eyes with a cruel-looking, straight over-hang of brow,—and stretched its flaterown, snake-like head far out to regard him. It opened the rending sickle of its beak and yelped at him;—three times, at deliberated inter-

val. Then the traveller vanished again into the gloom of the wood, and the arrogant bird plumed himself upon a triumph.

The trail now touched the river, only to forsake it and plunge into the heart of a growth of young Canada balsam. This sweet-smelling region traversed, the soft roar of the stream was left behind, and the forest resumed its former monumental features. For another hour the man tramped steadily, growing more conscious of his load, more and more uninterested in his surroundings; and for another hour his every step was noted by intent, unwinking eyes from branch and thicket. Then again the woods fell apart with a spreading of daylight. He came out upon the spacious solitude of a clearing; pushed through the harsh belt of blackberry and raspberry canes which grew as a neutral zone between forest and open; picked his way between the burned stumps and crimson fire-weeds of a long-desolate pasture; and threw down his bundle at the door of the loneliest cabin he had ever chanced to see.

II.

THE CABIN IN THE CLEARING.

THOUGH a spur of black, uncompromising spruce woods gave it near shelter on the north, the harshly naked Clearing fell away from it on the other three sides and left the cabin bleak. Not a shrub or a sapling broke the bareness of the massive log walls, whence the peeling bark hung in strips that fluttered desolately to every wind. Only a few tall and ragged weeds, pale green, and with sparse, whitish-gray seed-heads, straggled against the foundation-logs. The rough deal door sagged on its hinges, half-open. The door-sill gaped with a wide crack, rotted along the edges, and along the crack grew a little fringe of grass, ruthlessly crushed down by old Dave's gaudy bundle. The two small windows still held fragments of glass in their sashes,-glass thick with spiders' webs, and captive dust, and the débris of withered insects. The wide-eaved roof, well built of split cedar-slabs with a double overlay of bark, seemed to have turned a brave front to the assault of the seasons, and showed few casualties. Some thirty paces to one side stood another cabin, lower and more roughly built, whose roof had partly fallen in. This had been the barn,-this, with a battered lean-to of poles and interwoven spruce-boughs against its southerly wall. The barn was set down at hap-hazard, in no calculated or contenting relation to the main building, but just as the lay of the hillocks had made it simplest to find a level for the foundations. about it grew a tall, coarse grass, now gray and drily rustling, the brood of seeds which in past years had sifted through the chinks from the hay stored in the loft. The space between the two buildings, and for many square yards about the cabin door, was strewn thick with

decaying chips, through which the dock and plantain leaves, hardy strangers from the Settlement, pushed up their broad, obtuse intrusion. Over towards the barn lay the bleached skeleton of a bob-sled, the rusted iron shoe partly twisted from one runner; and in the centre of the space, where the chips gathered thickest and the plantains had gained least ground, lay a split chopping-log, whose scars bore witness to the vigor of a vanished axe.

The old lumberman fetched a deep breath, depressed by the immeasurable desolation. His eye wandered over the weedy fields, long fallow, and the rugged stump lots aflame here and there with patches of golden-rod and crimson fire-weed. To him these misplaced flares of color only seemed to make the loneliness more forlorn, perhaps by their association with homelier and kindlier scenes. He leaned on his

axe and pointed indefinitely with his thumb.

"Squat here! An' farm yon!" said he with contemplative disapproval; "I'd see myself furder first! But Kirstie Craig's got grit for ten men!"

Then he pushed the door open, lifting it to ease the hinge, and stepped peeringly inside. As he did so, a barn-swallow flickered out

through a broken pane.

The cabin contained two rooms, one much smaller than the other. The ceiling of the smaller room was formed by a loft at the level of the eaves, open towards the main room, which had no ceiling but the roof of slabs and bark. Here, running up through the east gable, was a chimney of rough stone, arched at the base to contain a roomy hearth, with swinging crane and rusted andirons. A settle of plank was fixed along the wall under the window. Down the middle of the room, its flank towards the hearth, ran a narrow table of two planks, supported by unsmoothed stakes driven into the floor. In the corner farthest from the chimney, over against the partition, was a shallow sleeping-bunk, a mere oblong box partly filled with dry red pickings of spruce and hemlock. The floor was littered with dead leaves and with ashes wind-drifted from the hearth.

Old Dave went over and glanced into the bunk. He found the spruce pickings scratched up towards one end, and arranged as they would be for no human occupant.

"Critters been sleepin' here," he muttered. Then, being hungry, he turned his attention to the hearth, and soon the old chimney tasted once more, after its long solitude, the cheer of the familiar heat.

It was now close upon sundown, and the lumberman was hungry. He untied the grimy, many-colored quilt. Kroof, the she bear, had been right in her surmise as to that bundle. It did contain pork, a small, well salted chunk of it; and presently the red-and-white-streaked

slices were sputtering crisply in the pan, while the walls and roof saturated themselves once more in old, remembered savors.

By the time the woodman had made his meal of fried pork and bread, and had smoked out his little pipe of blackened clay, a lonely twilight had settled about the cabin in the Clearing. He went to the door and looked out. A white mist rising along the forest edges seemed to cut him off from all the world of men, and a few large stars, at vast intervals, came out solemnly upon the round of sky. He shut the door, dropped the wooden latch into its slot, and threw a dry sliver upon the hearth to give him light for turning in. He was sparing of the firewood, remembering that Kirstie, when she came, would need it all. Then he took his pipe from his mouth, knocked out the ashes, wiped the stump on his sleeve, and put it in his pocket; took off his heavy boots, rolled himself in the colored quilt, and tumbled comfortably into the bunk, untroubled by any thought of its previous tenants. No sooner was he still than the mice came out and began scampering across the loft. He felt the sound homely and companionable, and so fell asleep. As he slept, the deep, undreaming sleep of the wholesomely tired, the meagre fire burned low, sank into pulsating coals, and faded into blackness.

It was perhaps an hour later that old Dave sat up, suddenly wide awake. He had no idea why he did it. He had heard no noise. He was certainly not afraid. There was no tremor in his seasoned nerves. Nevertheless, he was all at once absolutely awake, every sense alert. He felt almost as if there were some unkindred presence in the cabin. His first impulse was to spring from the bunk and investigate. But, doubtless because he had spent so great a portion of his life in the forest, and because he had all that day been subtly played upon by its influences, another instinct triumphed. He followed the immemorial fashion of the folk of the wood, and just kept still, waiting to learn by watching.

He saw the two dim squares of the windows, and once imagined that one of them was for an instant shadowed. At this he smiled grimly there in the dark, well knowing that among all the forest folk there was not one, not even the panther himself, so imprudent as to climb through a small window into a shut-up place all reeking with the fresh and ominous scent of man.

Still he listened, in that movelessness which the haunted neighborhood had taught him. The scurrying of the mice had ceased. There was no wind, and the darkness seemed all ears. The door, presently, gave a slow, gentle creaking, as if some heavy body pushed softly against it, trying the latch. The woodsman noiselessly reached out and felt the handle of his axe, leaning by the head of the bunk. But the latch held, and the menacing, furtive pressure was not repeated. Then upon

the very middle of the roof began a scratching, a light rattling of claws, and footfalls went padding delicately over the bark. This puzzled the woodsman, who wondered how the owner of those clawed and velveted feet could have reached the roof without some noise of climbing. The soft tread, with an occasional scratch and snap, moved up and down the roof several times; and once, during a pause, a deep breath, ending with a sharp, sniffing sound, was heard through the thin roof. Then came a firm but muffled thud upon the chips, as of the drop of a heavy animal.

The spell was broken, and old Dave rose from the bunk.

"It's jumped down off the roof! Wild cat, maybe, or lynx. No painters round, 'tain't likely; though't did sound heavy fur a cat!" said he to himself, as he strode to the door, axe in hand.

Fearlessly he threw the door open and looked out upon the glimmering night. The forest chill was in the air, the very breath and spirit of solitude. The mists gathered thickly a stone's throw from the cabin. He saw nothing that moved. He heard no stir. With a shrug of the shoulders he turned, latched the door again with just a trifle more exactness of precaution than before, lounged back to his bunk, and slept heedlessly till high dawn. A long finger of light, coldly rosy, came in through a broken pane to rouse him up.

When he went outside the mists yet clung white and chill about the Clearing, and all the weed-tops were beaded with thick dew. He noted that the chips were disturbed somewhat, but could find no definite track. Then, following a grassy path that led through a young growth of alder to the spring, he found signs. Down to the spring, and beyond into the woods, a trail was drawn that spoke plain language to his wood-wise scrutiny. The grass was bent, the dew brushed off, by a body of some bulk and going close to the ground.

"Painter!" he muttered, knitting his brows, and casting a wary glance about him. "Reckon Kirstie'd better bring a gun along."

All that day Dave Titus worked about the cabin and the barn. He mended the roof, patched the windows, rehung the door, filled the bunk—and two similar ones in the smaller room—with aromatic, fresh green spruce-tips, and worked a miracle of rejuvenation upon the barn. He also cleaned out the spring and chopped a handy pile of fire-wood. An old sheep-pen behind the barn he left in its ruins, saying to himself:

"What with the b'ars an' the painters, Kirstie ain't goin' to want to mess with sheep, I reckon. She'll have lots to do to look after her critters."

By "critters" he meant the cow and the yoke of steers which were Kirstie Craig's property in the Settlement, and which, as he knew, she was to bring with her to her exile in the ancient wood. That night, being now quite at home in the lonely cabin, and assured as to the stability of the door, Dave Titus slept dreamlessly from dark to dawn in the pleasant fragrance of his bunk. From dark to dawn the mice scurried in the loft, the bats flickered about the eaves, the unknown, furry bulks leaned on the door or padded softly up and down the roof, but troubled not his rest. Then the wild folk began to take account of the fact that the sovereignty of the Clearing had been resumed by man, and word of the new order went secretly about the forest. When, next morning, Dave Titus made careful survey of the Clearing's skirts, calculating what brush and poles would be needed for Kirstie's fencing, making rough guesses at the acreage, and noting with approval the richness of the good brown soil, he thought himself alone. But he was not alone. Speculative eyes, large and small, fierce and timorous, from all the edges of the ancient wood kept watch on him.

III.

THE EXILES FROM THE SETTLEMENT.

LATE that afternoon Kirstie Craig arrived. Her coming was a migration.

The first announcement of her approach was the dull tank, tank, a-tonk, tank of cowbells down the trail, at sound of which old Dave threw aside his axe and slouched away to meet her. There was heard a boy's voice shouting with young authority, "Gee! Gee, Bright! Gee, Star!" and the head of the procession came into view in the solemn green archway of the woods.

The head of the procession was Kirstie Craig herself, a tall, erect, strong-stepping, long-limbed woman in blue-gray homespuns, with a vivid scarlet kerchief tied over her head. She was leading, by a rope about its horns, a meekly tolerant black-and-white cow. To her left hand clung a skipping little figure in a pink calico frock, a broadbrimmed hat of coarse straw flung back from her hair and hanging by ribbons from her neck. This was the five-year-old Miranda, Kirstie Craig's daughter. She had ridden most of the journey and now was full of excited interest over the approach to her new home. Following close behind came the yoke of long-horned, mild-eyed steers,-Bright, a light sorrel, and Star, a curious red-and-black brindle with a radiating splash of white in the middle of his forehead. These, lurching heavily on the voke, were hauling a rude "drag," on which was lashed the meagre pile of Kirstie's belongings and supplies. Close at Star's heaving flank walked a lank and tow-haired boy from the Settlement, his long ox-goad in hand and an expression of resigned dissatisfaction on his gray-eyed, ruddy young face. Liking, and thoroughly believing in, Kirstie Craig, he had impulsively yielded to her request, and let

himself be hired to assist her flight into exile. But in so doing he had gone roughly counter to public opinion; for the Settlement, though stupidly inhospitable to Kirstie Craig, none the less resented her decision to leave it. Her scheme of occupying the deserted cabin, farming the deserted Clearing, and living altogether aloof from her unloved and unloving fellows, was scouted on every hand as the freak of a mad-woman; and young Dave, just coming to the age when public opinion begins to seem important, felt uneasy at being identified with a matter of public ridicule. He saw himself already, in imagination, a theme for the fine wit of the Settlement. Nevertheless, he was glad to be helping Kirstie, for he was sound and fearless at heart, and he counted her a true friend if she did seem to him a bit queer. He was faithful but disapproving. It was old Dave alone, his father, who backed the woman's venture without criticism or demur. He had known Kirstie from small girlhood, and known her for a brave, loval, silent, strongly enduring soul; and in his eyes she did well to leave the Settlement, where a shallow spite, sharpened by her proud reticence and supplied with arrows of injury by her misfortunes, made life an undesisting and immitigable hurt to her.

As she emerged from the twilight and came out upon the sunny bleakness of the Clearing the unspeakable loneliness of it struck a sudden pallor into her grave, dark face. For a moment even the humanity that was hostile to her seemed less cruel than this voiceless solitude. Then her resolution came back. The noble but somewhat immobile lines of her large features relaxed into a half smile at her own weakness. She took possession, as it were, by a sweeping gesture of her head, then silently gave her hand in greeting to old Dave, who had ranged up beside her and swung the dancing Miranda to his shoulder. Nothing was said for several moments as the party moved slowly up the slope, for they were folk of few words, these people, not praters, like so many of their fellows in the Settlement.

At last the pink frock began to wriggle on the lumberman's shoulder, and Miranda cried out.—

"Let me down, Uncle Dave; I want to pick those pretty flowers for my mother."

The crimson glories of the fire-weed had filled her eyes with delight, and in a few minutes she was struggling after the procession with her small arms full of the long-stalked blooms.

In front of the cabin door the procession stopped. Dave turned and said seriously:

"I've done the best I could by ye, Kirstie; an' I reckon it ain't so bad a site for ye, after all. But ye'll be powerful lonesome."

"Thank you kindly, Dave. But we ain't going to be lonesome, Mirandy an' the critters an' me."

"But there's painters round. You'd ought to hev a gun, Kirstie. I'll be sackin' out some stuff fur ye nex' week, Davey an' me, an' I reckon as how I'd better fetch ye a gun."

"We'll be right hungry for a sight of your faces by that time, Dave," said Kirstie, sweeping a look of tenderness over the boy's face, where he stood leaning on Star's brindled shoulders. "But I ain't scared o' panthers. Don't you mind about the gun, now, for I don't want it, an' I won't use it!"

"She ain't skeered o' nothin' that walks," muttered young Dave with admiration.

The strong face darkened.

"Yes, I am, Davey," she answered; "I'm afeared of evil tongues."

"Well, my girl, here ye're well quit of 'em," said the old lumberman, a slow anger burning on his rough-hewn face as he thought of certain busy backbiters in the Settlement.

Just then Miranda's small voice chimed in:

"Oh, Davey," she cried, catching gleefully at the boy's leg, "look at the nice, great big dog!" And her little brown finger pointed to a cluster of stumps, of all shapes and sizes, far over on the limits of the Clearing. Her wide, brown eyes danced elvishly. The others followed her gaze, all staring intently, but they saw no excuse for her excitement.

"It might be a b'ar she sees," said old Dave; "but I can't spot it."

"They're plenty hereabouts, I suppose," said Kirstie, rather indifferently, letting her eyes wander to other portions of her domain.

"Ain't no bear there," asserted young Dave, with all the confidence of his years. "It's a stump!"

"Nice big dog! I want it, mother," piped Miranda, suddenly darting away. But her mother's firm hand fell upon her shoulder.

"There's no big dog out here, child," she said quietly. And old Dave, after puckering his keen eyes and knitting his shaggy brows in vain, exclaimed:

"Oh, quit yer foolin', Mirandy, ye little witch! 'Tain't nothin' but stumps, I tell ye!"

It was the child's eyes, however, that had the keener vision, the subtler knowledge; and though now she let herself seem to be persuaded, and obediently carried her armful of fire-weed into the cabin, she knew it was no stump she had been looking at. And as for Kroof, the she bear,—though she had indeed sat moveless as a stump among the stumps,—she knew that the child had detected her. She saw that Miranda had the eyes that see everything and cannot be deceived.

For two days the man and boy stayed at the Clearing to help Kirstie get settled. The fields rang pleasantly with the tank, tank, a-tonk, tank of the cow-bells as the cattle fed over the new pasturage. The

edges of the Clearing resounded with axe-strokes, and busy voices echoed on the autumn air. There was much rough fencing to be built—zigzag arrangements of brush and saplings—in order that Kirstie's "critters" might be shut in till the sense of home should so grow upon them as

to keep them from straying.

The two days done, old Dave and young Dave shouldered their axes and went away. Kirstie forthwith straightened her fine shoulders to the Atlas-load of solitude which had threatened at first to overwhelm her, and she and Miranda settled down to a strangely silent routine. This was broken, however, at first, by weekly visits from old Dave, who came to bring hay and roots and other provisions against the winter, together with large "hanks" of coarse, homespun yarn to occupy Kirstie's fingers during the long winter evenings.

Kirstie was well fitted to the task she had so bravely set herself. She could swing an axe, and the fencing grew steadily through the fall. She could guide the plough; and before the snow came some ten acres of the long-fallow sod had been turned up in brown furrows, to be ripened and mellowed by the frosts for next spring's planting. The black-and-white cow was still in good milk, and could be depended on not to go dry a day more than two months before calving. The steers were thrifty and sleek, and showed no signs of fretting for old pastures. The hoarse but homely music of the cow-bells, sounding all day over the fields, and giving out an occasional soft tonk-a-tonk from the darkness of the stalls at night, came to content her greatly. The lines which she had brought from the Settlement smoothed themselves from about her mouth and eyes, and the large, sufficing beauty of her face was revealed in the peace of her new life.

About seven years before this move to the cabin in the Clearing, Kirstie Craig-then Kirstie MacAlister-had gone one evening to the cross-roads grocery which served the Settlement as General Intelligence Office. Here was the post-office as well, in a corner of the store fitted up with some dozen of lettered and dusty pigeon-holes. Nodding soberly to the loafers who lounged about on the soap-boxes and nail-kegs, Kirstie stepped up to the counter to buy a quart of molasses. was just passing over her gaudy blue-and-yellow pitcher to be filled, when a stranger came in who caught her attention. He did far more than catch her attention; for the stately and sombre girl, who had never before taken pains to look twice on any man's face, now felt herself grow hot and cold as this stranger's eyes glanced carelessly over her splendid form. She heard him ask the postmaster for lodgings. He spoke in a tired voice, and accents that set him apart from the men of the Settlement. She looked at him twice and yet again, noted with a pang that he seemed ill, and met his eye fairly for just one heartbeat. At once she flushed scarlet under it, snatched up her pitcher,

and almost rushed from the store. The loafers were too much occupied with the new arrival to notice her perturbation; but he noticed it, and was pleased. Never before had he seen so splendid a girl as this black-haired, sphinx-faced creature, with the scarlet kerchief about her head. She was a picture that awoke the artist in him and put him in haste to resume his palette and brushes.

For Frank Craig, dilettante and man of the world, was a good deal of an artist when the mood seized him strongly enough. When another mood seized him, with sufficient vigor to overcome his native indolence, he was something of a musician, and again, more rarely, something of a poet. The temperament was his; but the steadiness of purpose, the decision of will, the long-enduring patience, these were not. He had just enough money to let him float through his world without work. Health he had not, and the poor semblance of it which mere youth supplied he had squandered childishly. Hearing of new health in the gift of the northern spruce woods, with their high, balsam-sweet airs, he had drifted away from his temptations and at last sought out this remote backwoods settlement, as a place where he might expect to get much for little. He was very good to look upon,about as tall as Kirstie herself, slender, active, alert in movement when not wearied, thorough-bred in every line of face and figure. His eyes, of a very deep grayish green under long, black lashes, were penetrating in their clearness, but curiously unstable. In their beautiful depths there was waged for ever a strange conflict between honesty and inconstancy. His face, pale and sallow, was clothed with a trimly pointed, close, dark beard; and his hair, just a trifle more abundant than the fashion of his world approved, was of a peculiar, tawny dark bronze.

The air of the Settlement was healing and tonic to his lungs, and before he had breathed it a month he felt himself aglow with joyous life. Before he had breathed it a month he had won Kirstie Mac-Alister, to whom he seemed little less than a god. To him, on her part, she was a splendid mystery. Even her peculiarities of grammar and accent did no more than lend a piquancy to her strangeness. They appealed as a rough, fresh flavor to his wearied senses. Here, safe from the wasting world, he would really paint, would really write, and life would come to mean something. One day he and Kirstie went away on the rattling old mail-wagon which visited the Settlement twice a week. Ten days later they came back as man and wife; whereat the Settlement showed no surprise whatever.

For a whole year after the birth of his child, the great-eyed and fairy-like Miranda, Frank Craig stayed at the Settlement, seemingly content. He was loving, admiring, tactful, proud of his dark, impressive wife and the quickness with which she caught his purity of Vol. LXV.—32

speech. Then one day he seemed restless. He talked of business in the city,—of a month's absence that could not be avoided. With a kind of terror at her heart Kirstie heard him, but offered no hint of opposition to so reasonable a purpose. And by the next trip of the rattling mail-wagon he went, leaving the Settlement dark to Kirstie's eyes.

But—he never came back. The months rolled by, and no word came of him, and Kirstie gnawed her heart out in proud anguish. Inquiry throughout the cities of the coast brought no hint of him. Then, as the months climbed into years, that tender humanity which resents misfortune as a crime started a rumor that Kirstie had been "Perhaps there had been no marriage," went the whisper at "Served her right, with her airs, thinkin' she could ketch a gentleman!" was the next development of it. Kirstie, with her superior air, had never been popular at best; and after her marriage the sufficiency and exclusiveness of her joy, coupled with the aristocratic purity of speech which she had adopted, made her the object of jealous criticism through all the country-side. When the temple of her soaring happiness came down about her ears, then was the time for her chastening, and the gossips of the Settlement took a hand in it with right good will. Nothing else worth talking about happened in that neighborhood during the next few years, so the little rumor was cherished and nourished. Presently it grew to a great scandal, and the gossips came to persuade themselves that things had not been as they should be. Kirstie, they said, was being very properly punished by Providence, and it was well to show that they, chaste souls, stood on the side of Providence. If Providence threw a stone, it was surely their place to throw three.

At last some one of imagination vivid beyond that of the common run added a new feature. Some one else had heard from some one else of some one having seen Frank Craig in the city. There was at first a difference of opinion as to what city, but that little discrepancy was soon smoothed out. Then a woman was suggested, and forthwith it appeared that he had been seen driving with a handsome woman, behind a spanking pair, with liveried coachman and footman on the box. Thus gradually the myth acquired a color to endear it to the unoccupied rural imagination. Kirstie's inquiries soon proved to her the utter baselessness of the scandal, but she was too proud to refute what she knew to be a cherished lie. She endured, for Miranda's sake, till the dark face grew lined, and the black eyes smouldered dangerously, and she began to fear lest she should do some one a hurt. At last, having heard by chance of that deserted Clearing in the forest, she sold out her cottage at a sacrifice and fled from the bitter tongues.

MIRANDA AND THE FURTIVE FOLK.

From the very first day of her new life at the Clearing, Miranda had found it to her taste. Her mother loved it for its peace, for its healing; but to the elvish child it had an incomparably deeper and more positive appeal. For her the place was not solitary. Her wide eyes saw what Kirstie could not see, and to her the forest edges—which she was not allowed to pass—were full of most satisfying playmates just waiting for her to invite their confidence. Meanwhile, she had the two steers and the black-and-white cow to talk to. Her mother noticed that when she sat down in the grass by the head of one of the animals, and began her low, mysterious communication, it would stop its feeding and hearken motionless. The black-and-red brindle, Star, would sometimes follow her about like a dog, as if spelled by the child's solemn eyes. Then the solemn eyes on a sudden would dance with light, her lips would break into a peal of whimsical mirth, shrill but not loud, and the steer, with a flick of his tail and an offended snort, would turn again to his pasturing.

In a hole in one of the logs, just under the eaves of the cabin, there was a family of red squirrels, the four youngsters about three-fourths grown and almost ready to shift for themselves. No sooner had the old lumberman and his son gone away than the squirrels began to make themselves much at home. They saw in Kirstie a huge and harmless creature whose presence in the cabin was useful to scare away their enemies. But in Miranda they found a sort of puzzling kinship. The two old squirrels would twitch up and down on the edge of the roof, chattering shrilly to her, flirting their airy tails, and stretching down their heads to scan her searchingly with their keen, protruding eyes, while Miranda, just below, would dance excitedly up and down in response, nodding her head, jerking her elbows, and chattering back at them in a quick, shrill voice. It was a very different voice to the soft murmurs in which she talked to the cattle, but to the squirrels it appeared satisfactory. Before she had been a week at the Clearing the whole squirrel family seemed to regard her as one of themselves, snatching bread from her tiny brown fingers, and running up her skirt to her shoulder whensoever the freak possessed them. Kirstie they ignored,—the harmless, necessary Kirstie, mother to Miranda.

No sooner were they fairly settled than the child discovered an incongruity in her gay pink calico frocks, and got her mother to bury them out of sight in the deal chest behind the door. She was at ease now only in the dull, blue-gray homespun, which made her feel at one with her quiet surroundings. Nevertheless the vein of contradiction,

which streaked her baby heart with bright inconsistencies, bade her demand always a bit of scarlet ribbon about her neck. This whim Kirstie humored with a smile, recognizing in it a perpetuation of the scarlet kerchief about her own black hair. As for Miranda's hair, it was black like her mother's when seen in shadow, but in the sunshine it showed certain tawny lights, a pledge of her fatherhood to all who had known Frank Craig.

So the autumn slipped by, and the silent folk of the wood, watching her curiously and unwinkingly as she played while her mother built fences, came to know Miranda as a creature in some way not quite alien to themselves. They knew that she often saw them when her mother's eyes could not. Perceiving that her mother did not quite understand her at times, when she tried to point out pretty animals among the trees, the child grew a little sensitive and reticent on the subject: and the furtive folk, who had at first inclined to resent her inescapable vision, presently realized her reserves and were appeased. Her gray little sprite of a figure might have darted in among the trees, turned to a statue, and become suddenly as invisible as any lynx or cat or hare or pine-marten amongst them, -except, indeed, for that disquieting flame of scarlet at her neck. This was a puzzle to all the folk of the wood, continually reminding them that this quiet, flitting creature did not really belong to the wood at all, but to the great woman with the red about her head, whose axe made so vexing a clamor amid the trees. As for Kroof, the bear, that bit of scarlet so interested her that one day, being curious, she came much nearer than she intended. Miranda saw her, of course, and gazed with wideeyed longing for the "great big dog" as a playmate. Just then Kirstie saw her too,-very close at hand, and very huge.

For the first time Kirstie Craig felt something like fear,—not for herself, but for the child. Thrusting Miranda roughly behind her, she clutched her axe and stood motionless, erect and formidable, awaiting attack. Her great black eyes blazed ominously upon the intruder. But Kroof, well filled with late berries and sweet wild roots and honey-comb, was in most amiable humor, and just shambled off lazily when she saw herself detected; whereupon Kirstie, with a short laugh of relief, threw down her axe and snatched the child to her breast. Miranda, however, was weeping salt tears of bitter disappointment.

"I want it, mother," she sobbed. "The nice big dog. You scared it away."

Kirstie had heard more than enough about the dog.

"Hark now, Miranda," she said severely, giving her shoulder a slight shake to enforce attention. "You just remember what I say. That ain't a dog; that's a bear. A bear! I say. And don't you ever

go near it, or it'll eat you up. Mind you now, Miranda, or I'll just whip you well."

Kirstie was a little fluttered and thrown off her poise at the idea of Miranda encountering the great animal alone, and perhaps attempting to bring it home to play with, so she forgot for a moment the wonted stringency of her logic. As for Miranda, she consented to obey and held her tongue, but she clung secretly to her own opinion on the subject of the big dog. She knew very well that the fascinating animal did not want to eat her; and her mother's order seemed to her just one of those bits of maternal perversity which nobody can ever hope to understand.

The incident, however, overshadowed the child's buoyant spirits for the best part of two whole days. It thrust so very far off the time she hoped for, when she might know and talk to the shy, furtive folk of the wood, with their strange, unwinking eyes. Her mother kept her now ever close to her skirts. She had no one to talk to—about the things her mother did not understand—except the steers, and the black-and-white cow, and the rather irrepressible squirrels.

The winter, which presently fell white and soundless and sparkling about the lonely cabin, was to Miranda full of events. Before the snow Kirstie had repaired the old lean-to, turning it into a fowl-house; and now they had six prime hens to occupy it, and a splendid, flame-red cock, who crowed most loftily. Miranda felt that this proud bird despised her, so she did not get on very well with him, but the hens were amiable, if uninteresting, and it was a perennial joy to search out their eggs in the loft or the corners of the stalls. Then there were the paths to be kept clear after every snow-fall,—the path to the spring, the path to the barn door and hen-house, the path to the wood-pile. Uncle Dave had made her a hand-sled, and she had the exhilarating duty of hauling in the wood from the pile as fast as her mother could split it. It was a spirited race, this, in which her mother somehow always managed to keep just about one stick ahead.

And the fishing,—this was the great event, coming about once a week if the weather suited. Both Kirstie and Miranda were semi-vegetarians. Frank Craig had been a decryer of flesh-meat, one who would have chosen to live on fruits and roots and grains and eggs, had not his body cried out against the theory of his brain. But he had so far infected his wife with his prejudice that neither she nor the child now touched meat in any form. The aversion, artificial on Kirstie's part, was instinctive on Miranda's. But as for fish—fish seemed to them both quite another matter. Even Miranda of the sympathies and the perceptions had no sense of fellowship for these cold-blooded, clammy, unpleasant things. She had a fierce little delight in catching them; she had a contented joy in eating them, when

fried to a savory brown in butter and yellow corn-meal. For Miranda was very close to Nature,—and Nature laughs at consistency.

The fishing in which Miranda so delighted took place in winter at the lake. When the weather seemed quite settled, Kirstie would set out on her strong snow-shoes, with Miranda on her fairy fac-similes of them striding bravely beside her, and follow the long white trail down to the lake. Even to Miranda's discerning eyes the trail was lonely now, for most of the forest folk were either asleep or abroad or fearful lest their tinted coats should reveal them against the snowy surface. Once in a while she detected the hare squatting under a spruce bush, looking like a figure of snow in his winter coat; and once or twice, too, she saw the weasel, white now, with but a black tip to his tail as a warning to all who had cause to dread his cruelty. Miranda knew nothing about him, but she did not quite like the weasel, -which was just as well, seeing that the weasel hated Miranda and all the world besides. As for the lynx and the brown cat, they kept warily aloof in their winter shyness. The wood-mice were asleep, warm, furry balls buried in their dry nests far from sight; and Kroof, too. was dreaming away the frozen months in a hollow under a pine-root, with five or six feet of snow drifted over her door to keep her sleep unjarred.

Arrived at the lake, Kirstie would cut two holes through the ice with her nimble axe, bait two hooks with bits of fat pork, and put a line into Miranda's little, mittened hands. The trout in the lake were numerous and hungry, and somehow Miranda's hook had ever the more deadly fascination for them, and Miranda's catch would often outnumber Kirstie's by three to one. Though her whole small being seemed absorbed in the fierce game, Miranda was all the time vividly aware of the white immensity enfolding her. The lifeless white level of the lake, the encircling shores all white, the higher fringe of trees, black beneath but deply garmented with white; the steep mountainside, at the foot of the lake, all white; and ever-brooding, glimmering opalescent, fathomless, the flat white arch of sky. Across the whiteness of the mountain-side, one day, Miranda saw a dark beast moving, a beast that looked to her like a great cat. She saw it halt, gazing down at them, and even at that distance she could see it stretch wide its formidable jaws. A second more and she heard the cry which came from those formidable jaws,-a high, harsh, screeching wail, which amused her so that she forgot to land a fish. But her mother seemed troubled at the sound. She gazed very steadily for some seconds at the far-off shape, and then said:

"Panthers, Miranda! I don't mind bears, but with panthers we've got to keep our eyes open. I reckon we'll get home 'fore sun-down to-day; and mind you keep right close by me every step."

All this solicitude seemed to Miranda a lamentable mistake. She had no doubt in her own mind that the panther would be nice to play with.

As I have said, the winter was for Miranda full of events. Twice, as she was carrying out the morning dish of hot potatoes and meal to the hens, she saw Ten-Tine, the bull caribou, cross the clearing with measured, stately tread, his antlers held high, his sensitive nose stretched straight ahead of him, his demure cows at his heels. was before the snow lay deep in the forest. Later in the winter she would look out with eager interest every morning to see what visitors had been about the cabin during the night. Sometimes there was a fox-track, very dainty, cleanly indented, and regular, showing that the animal who made it knew where he was going and had something definite in view. Hare-tracks there were sure to be,-she soon came to recognize those three-toed, triplicate clusters of impressions, stamped deeply upon the snow by the long, elastic jump. Whenever there was a weasel-track,-narrow, finely pointed, treacherously innocent,-it was sure to be closely parallel to that of a leaping hare, and Miranda soon apprehended, by that instinct of hers, that the companionship was not like to be well for the hare. Once, to her horror, she found that a hare-track ended suddenly, right under the cabin window, in a blood-stained patch bestrewn with fur and bones. All about it the snow was swept as if by wings, and two strange footprints told the They were long, these two footprints, forked, with deep hooks for toes, and an obscure sort of brush-mark behind them. where the owl had sat up on the snow for a few minutes after dining, to ponder on the merits of the general order of things and of a good meal in particular. Miranda's imagination painted her a picture of the big bird sitting there in the moonlight beside the bloody bones, his round, horned head turning slowly from one side to the other, his hooked beak snapping now and again in reminiscence, his sharp eyes wide open and flaming. There was also the track of a fox, which had come up from the direction of the barn, investigated the scene of action, and gone off at a sharp, decisive angle towards the woods. Miranda had no clue to tell her how stealthily that fox had come or how nearly he had succeeded in catching an owl for his breakfast; but from that morning she bore a grudge against owls, and never could hear without a flash of wrath their hollow Two-hoo-hoo-whoo-oo echoing solemnly from the heart of the pine-wood.

But the owl was not the only bird that Miranda knew that winter. Well along in January, when the haws were all gone, and most of the withered rowan-berries had been eaten, and famine threatened such of the bird-folk as had not journeyed south, there came to the cabin brisk foraging flocks of the ivory-billed snow-bird. For these Miranda

had crumbs ready always, and as word of her bounty went abroad in the forest her feathered pensioners increased. Even a hungry crow would come now and then, glossy and sidling, watchful and audacious, to share the hospitality of this kind Miranda of the crumbs. She liked the crows, and would hear no ill of them from her mother; but most of all she liked those big, rosy-headed, truthful children, the pine-grosbeaks, who would almost let her take them in her hands. Whenever their wandering flocks came down to her, she held winter carnival for them.

During those days when it was not fine enough to go out,-when the snow drove in great swirls and phantom armies across the open, and a dull roar came from the straining forest, and the fowls went to roost at mid-day, and the cattle munched contentedly in their stanchions, glad to be shut in,-then the cabin seemed very pleasant to Miranda. On such days the drifts were sometimes piled half-way up the windows. On such days the dry logs on the hearth blazed more brightly than their wont, and the flames sang more merrily up the chimney. On such days the hot piles of buckwheat cakes, drenched in butter and brown molasses, tasted more richly toothsome than at any time else. And on such days she learned to knit. This was very interesting. At first she knit gay black-and-red garters for her mother; and then, speedily mastering this rudimentary process, she was fairly launched on a stocking with four needles. The stocking, of course, was for her mother, who would not find fault if it were knitted too tightly here and too loosely there. As for Kirstie herself, her nimble needles would click all day, turning out socks and mittens of wonderful thickness to supply the steady market of the lumber-camps.

One night, after just such a cosey, shut-in day, Miranda was awakened by a scratching sound on the roof. Throughout the cold weather Miranda slept with her mother in the main room, in a broad new bunk which had been substituted for the narrow one wherein old Dave had slept on his first visit to the Clearing. Miranda caught her mother's arm and shook it gently. But Kirstie was already awake, lying, with wide eyes, listening.

"What's that, mother, trying to get in?" asked the child in a whisper.

"Hush-sh-sh," replied Kirstie, laying her fingers on the child's mouth

The scratching came louder now, as the light snow was swept clear and the inquisitive claws reached the bark. Then it stopped. After a second or two of silence there was a loud, blowing sound, as if the visitor were clearing his nostrils from the snow and cold. This was followed by two or three long, penetrating sniffs, so curiously hungry in their suggestion that even Miranda's dauntless little heart beat very

fast. As for Kirstie, she was distinctly nervous. Springing out of bed, she ran to the hearth, raked the coals from the ashes, fanned them, heaped on birch bark and dry wood, and in a moment had a great blaze roaring up the chimney-throat. The glow from the windows streamed far out across the snow. To the visitor it proved disconcerting. There was one more sharp rattle of claws upon the roof, then a fluffy thump below the eaves. The snow had stopped falling hours before, and when, at daylight, Kirstie opened the door, there was a deep hollow where the panther had jumped down, and there was the floundering trail where he had fled.

This incident made Miranda amend, in some degree, her first opinion of panthers.

V.

KROOF, THE SHE BEAR.

Spring came early to the Clearing that year. Kirstie's autumn furrows, dark and steaming, began to show in patches through the diminished snow. The chips before the house and the litter about the barn, drawing the sun strongly, were first of all uncovered, and over them, as to the conquest of new worlds, the haughty cock led forth his dames to scratch. "Saunders," Miranda had called him, in remembrance of a strutting beau at the Settlement, and with the advent of April cheer, and increasing abundance of eggs, and an ever-resounding cackle from his complacent partlets, his conceit became insufferable. One morning, when something she did offended his dignity, he had the presumption to face her with beak advanced and wide-ruffed neck feathers. But Saunders did not know Miranda. Quick as a flash of light she seized him by the legs, whirled him around her head, and flung him headlong, squawking with fear and shame, upon his own dunghill. It took him a good hour to recover his self-esteem, but after that Miranda stood out in his eyes as the one creature in the world to be respected.

When the Clearing was quite bare except along the edges of the forest, and Kirstie was again at work on her fencing, the black-and-white cow gave birth to a black-and-white calf, which Miranda at once claimed as her own property. It was a very wabbly, knock-kneed little heifer, but Miranda admired it immensely, and with lofty disregard of its sex christened it Michael.

About this time the snow shrank away from her hollow under the pine-root, and Kroof came forth to sun herself. She had lived all winter on nothing but the fat stored up on spaces of her capacious frame. Nevertheless, she was not famished; she had still a reserve to come and go on till food should be abundant. A few days after waking up she bore a cub. It was the custom of her kind to bear two cubs at a

birth, but Kroof, besides being by long odds the biggest she bear ever known in that region, had a pronounced individuality of her own, and was just as well satisfied with herself over one cub as over two.

The hollow under the pine-root was warm and softly lined, a condition quite indispensable to the new-comer, which was about as unlike a bear as any baby creature of its size could well manage to be. It was blind, helpless, whimpering, more shapeless and clumsy-looking than the clumsiest conceivable pup, and almost naked. Its tender, hairless hide looked a poor thing to confront the world with, but its appetite was astounding and Kroof's milk inexhaustible. In a few days a soft, dark fur began to appear. As the mother sat, hour by hour, watching it and suckling it, half erect upon her haunches, her fore-legs braced wide apart, her head stretched as far down as possible, her narrow red tongue hanging out to one side, her eyes half closed in rapture, it seemed to grow visibly beneath her absorbing gaze. Before four weeks had passed the cub was coverd with a jet-black coat, soft and glossy. This being the case, he thought it time to open his eyes and look about.

He was now about the size of a small cat, but of a much heavier build. His head, at this age, was shorter for its breadth than his mother's; the ears much larger, fan-like, and conspicuous. His eyes, very softly vague at first, soon acquired a humorous, mischievous expression which went aptly with the erect, inquisitive ears. Altogether he was a fine baby, a fair justification of Kroof's pride.

The spring being now fairly forward, and pale, whitish-green shoots upthrusting themselves numerously through the dead leaves, and the big crimson leaf-bud of the skunk-cabbage vividly punctuating the sombreness of the swamp, Kroof led her infant forth to view their world. He had no such severe and continued education to undergo as that which falls to the lot of other youngsters among the folk of the ancient wood. For those others the first lesson, the hardest and the most tremendous in its necessity, was how to avoid their enemies. With this lesson ill-learned, all others found brief term; for the noiseless drama, in which all the folk of the forest had their parts, moved ever, through few scenes or through many, to a tragic close. But the bear, being for the most part dominant, had his immunities. panther, swift and fierce and masterful, never deliberately sought quarrel with the bear, being mindful of his disastrous clutch and the lightning sweep of his paw. The bear-cub, therefore, going with its mother till almost full grown, gave no thought at all to enemies; and the cub, with such a giantess as Kroof to mother him, might safely make a mock at even panthers. Kroof's cub had thus but simple things to learn, following close at his mother's flank. During the first blind weeks of his cubhood he had, indeed, to acquire the prime virtue of silence; which was not easy, for he loved to whimper and grumble in a comfortable little fashion of his own. This was all right while Kroof was at home, but when she was out foraging, then silence was the thing. This he learned, partly from Kroof's admonitions, partly from a deep-seated instinct, and whenever he was left alone he held his tongue. There was always the possibility, slight but unpleasant, of a fox or a brown cat noting Kroof's absence, and seizing the chance to savor a delicate morsel of sucking-bear.

Wandering the silent woods with Kroof, the cub would sniff carefully at the moist earth and budding shoots wheresoever his mother stopped to dig. He thus learned where to find the starchy roots which form so large a part of the bear's food in spring. He found out the important difference between the sweet groundnuts and the fiery, bitter bulb of the arum, or Indian turnip, and he learned to go over the grassy meadows by the lake and dig unerringly for the wild bean's nourishing tubers. He discovered, also, what old stumps to tear apart when he wanted a pleasantly acid tonic dose of the larvæ of the wood-ant. Among these serious occupations he would gambol between his mother's feet, or caper hilariously on his hind legs. Soon he would have been taught to detect a bee-tree and to rob it of its delectable stores without getting his eyes stung out; but just then the mysterious forest fates dropped the curtain on his merry little play, as a reminder that not even for the great black bear could the rule of doom be relaxed.

Kroof's first wanderings with the cub were in the neighborhood of the Clearing, where both were sometimes seen by Miranda. The sight of the cub so overjoyed her that she departed from her usual reticence as to the forest folk, and told her mother about the lovely glossy little dog that the nice, great big dog took about with her. The only result was that Kirstie gave her a sharp warning.

"Dog!" she exclaimed severely. "Didn't I tell you, Miranda, it was a bear? Bears are mostly harmless, if you leave them alone. But an old bear with a cub is mighty ugly. Mind what I say now; you keep by me and don't go too nigh to the edge of the woods."

And so, for the next few weeks, Miranda was watched very strictly, lest her childish daring should involve her with the bears.

Along in the summer Kroof began to lead the cub wider afield. The longer journeys vexed the little animal at first and tired him, so that sometimes he would throw himself down on his back, pinky-white soles of protest in the air, and refuse to go a step farther. But in spite of the appeal of his quizzical little black snout, big ears, and twinkling eyes, old Kroof would box him sternly till he was glad enough to jump up and renew the march. With the exercise he got a little leaner, but much harder, and soon came to delight in the widest wandering. Nothing could tire him, and at the end of the journey he would chase rab-

bits or weasels or other such elusive creatures till convicted of its futility by his mother's sarcastic comments.

These wide wanderings were, indeed, the making of him, so that he promised to rival Kroof herself in prowess and stature; but alas! poor cub, they were also his undoing. Had he stayed at home—but even that might have little availed, for among the folk of the wood it is right at home that fate most surely strikes.

One day they two were exploring far over in the next valley,—the valley of the Quah-Davic, a tract little familiar to Kroof herself. At the noon hour Kroof lay down in a little hollow of coolness beside a spring that drip-drop, drip-drop, drip-dropped from the face of a green rock. The cub, however, went tirelessly exploring the thickets for fifty yards about—out of sight, indeed, but scrupulously never out of earshot.

Near one of these thickets his nostrils caught a new and enthralling savor. He had never in his brief life smelled anything at all like it, but an unerring instinct told him it was the smell of something very good to eat. Pushing through the leafage, he came upon the source of the fragrance. Under a slanting structure of logs he found a piece of flesh, yellowish white streaked thickly with dark, reddish brown,—and oh, so sweet smelling. It was stuck temptingly on a forked point of wood. His ears stood up very wide and high in his eagerness. His sensitive nostrils wrinkled as he sniffed at the tempting find. He decided that he would just taste it, and then go fetch his mother. But it was a little high up for him. He rose, set his small white teeth into it, clutched it with his soft fore-paws, and flung his whole weight upon it to pull it down.

Kroof, dozing in her hollow of coolness, heard a small, agonized screech, cut short horribly. On the instant her great body went tearing in a panic through the underbrush. She found poor cub crushed flat under the huge timbers of a "dead-fall," his glossy head and one paw sticking out piteously, his little red tongue protruding from his distorted mouth.

Kroof needed no second look to know in her heart he was dead,—stone dead,—but in the rage of her grief she would not acknowledge it. She tore madly at the great timber,—so huge a thing to set to crush so small a merry life,—and so astonishing was the strength of her claws and her vast fore-arms that in the course of half an hour she had the trap fairly demolished. Softly she removed the crushed and shapeless body, licking the mouth, the nostrils, the pitifully staring eyes, snuggling it lightly as a breath, and moaning over it. She would lift the head a little with her paw, and redouble her caresses as it fell limply aside. Then it grew cold. This was testimony she could not pretend to ignore. She ceased the caresses which proved so vain to keep warmth

in the little body she loved. With her snout held high in the air she turned around slowly twice, as if in an appeal to some power not clearly apprehended; then, without another glance at her dead, she rushed off madly through the forest.

All night she wandered aimlessly,—hither and thither through the low Quah-Davic valley,—over the lower slopes of the mountain,—through tracts where she had never been but of which she took no note; and towards noon of the following day she found herself once more in the ancient wood, not far from the Clearing. She avoided widely the old den under the pine-root, and at last threw herself down, worn out and with unsuckled teats fiercely aching, behind the trunk of a fallen hemlock.

She slept heavily for an hour or two. Then she was awakened by the crying of a child. She knew it at once for Miranda's voice, and being in some way stirred by it, in spite of the preoccupation of her pain, she got up and moved noiselessly towards the sound.

VI

THE INITIATION OF MIRANDA.

That same day, just after noon-meat, when Miranda had gone out with the scraps in a yellow bowl to feed the hens, Kirstie had been taken with what the people at the Settlement would have called "a turn." All the morning she had felt unusually oppressed by the heat, but had thought little of it. Now, as she was wiping the dishes, she quite unaccountably dropped one of them on the floor. The crash aroused her. She saw with a pang that it was Miranda's little plate of many colors. Then things turned black about her. She just managed to reel across to the bunk, and straightway fell upon it in a kind of faint. From this state she passed into a heavy sleep, which lasted for several hours, and probably saved her from some violent sickness.

When Miranda had fed the hens she did not go straight back to her mother. Instead, she wandered off towards the edge of the dark firwood, where it came down close behind the cabin. The broad light of the open field, now green with buckwheat, threw a living illumination far in among the cool arcades.

Between the straight gray trunks Miranda's clear eyes saw something move. She liked it very much indeed. It looked to her extremely like a cat, only larger than any cat she had seen at the Settlement, taller on its legs, and with a queer, thick stump of a tail. In fact, it was a cat, the brown cat, or lesser lynx. Its coat was a red brown, finely mottled with a paler shade. It had straight brushes of bristles on the tips of its ears, like its big cousin, the Canada lynx, only much less conspicuous than his, and the expression on the moonlike round

of its face was both fierce and shy. But it was a cat, plainly enough, and Miranda's heart went out to it, as it sat up there in the shadows, watching her steadily with wide, pale eyes.

"Oh, pretty pussy! pretty pussy!" called Miranda, stretching out

her hands to it coaxingly, and running into the wood.

The brown cat waited unwinking till she was about ten paces off, then turned and darted deeper into the shadows. When it was all but out of sight it stopped, turned again, and sat up to watch the eager child. It seemed curious as to the bit of scarlet at her neck. Miranda was now absorbed in the pursuit, and sanguine of catching the beautiful pussy. This time she was suffered to come almost within grasping distance before the animal again wheeled with an angry pfuff and darted away. Disappointed, but not discouraged, Miranda followed again; and the little play was repeated, with slight variation, till her great eyes were full of blinding tears, and she was ready to drop with weariness. Then the malicious cat, tired of the game and no longer curious about the ribbon, vanished altogether, and Miranda sat down to cry.

But she was not the child to make much fuss over a small disappointment. In a very few minutes she jumped up, dried her eyes with the backs of her tiny fists, and started, as she thought, straight for home. At first she ran, thinking her mother might be troubled at her absence. But not coming to the open as soon as she expected, she stopped, looked about her very carefully, and then walked forward with continual circumspection. She walked on and on, till she knew she had gone far enough to reach home five times over. Her feet faltered, and then she stood quite still, helplessly. She knew that she was lost. All at once the ancient wood, the wood she had longed for, the wood whose darkness she had never feared, became lonely, menacing, terrible. She broke into loud wailing.

This was what Kroof had heard and was coming to investigate. But other ears heard it too.

A tawny form, many times larger than the perfidious brown cat but not altogether unlike it in shape, crept stealthily towards the sound. Though his limbs looked heavy, his paws large, in comparison with his lank body and small, flat, cruel head, his movements nevertheless were noiseless as light. At each low-stooping, sinuous step, his tail twitched nervously. When he caught sight of the crying child he stopped, and then crept up more stealthily than before, crouching so low that his belly almost touched the ground, his neck stretched out in a line with his tail.

He made absolutely no sound, yet something within Miranda's sensitive brain heard him before he was quite within springing distance. She stopped her crying, glanced suddenly around, and fixed a darkly clear look upon his glaring green eyes. Poor little frightened and

lonely child though she was, there was yet something subtly disturbing to the beast in that steady gaze of hers. It was the empty gloom, the state of being lost, which had made Miranda's fear. Of an animal, however fierce, she had no instinctive terror, and now, though she knew that the cruel-eyed beast before her was the panther, it was a sort of indignant curiosity that was uppermost in her mind.

The beast shifted his eyes uneasily under her unwavering look. He experienced a moment's indecision as to whether or not it was well, after all, to meddle with this unterrified, clear-gazing creature. Then an anger grew within him. He fixed his hypnotizing stare more resolutely, and lashed his tail with angry jerks. He was working himself

up to the final and fatal spring, while Miranda watched him.

Just then a strange thing happened. Out from behind a bowlder, whence she had been eying the situation, shambled the huge, black form of Kroof. She was at Miranda's side in an instant; and rising upon her hindquarters, a towering, indomitable bulk, she squealed defiance to the panther. As soon as Miranda saw her "great big dog" (which she knew quite well, however, to be a bear), she seemed to realize how frightened she had been of the panther, and she recognized that strong defence had come. With convulsive sobs she sprang forward and hid her tear-stained little face in the bear's shaggy flank, clutching at the soft fur with both hands. To this impetuous embrace Kroof paid no attention, but continued to glower menacingly at the panther.

As for the panther, he was unaffectedly astonished. He lost his stealthy, crouching, concentrated attitude, and rose to his full height, lifted his head, dropped his tail, and stared at the phenomenon. If this child was a protégé of Kroof's, he wanted none of her, for it would be a day of famine indeed when he would wish to force conclusions with the giant she bear. Moreover, he recognized some sort of power and prerogative in Miranda herself, some right of sovereignty, as it were, which had made it distinctly hard for him to attack her even while she had no other defence than her disconcerting gaze. Now, however, he saw clearly that there was something very mysterious indeed about her. He decided that it would be well to have an understanding with his mate (who was more savage though less powerful than himself) that the child should not be meddled with, no matter what chance should arise. With this conclusion he wheeled about and walked off indifferently, moving with head erect and a casual air. One would hardly have known him for the stealthy monster of ten minutes before.

When he was gone Kroof lay down on her side and gently coaxed Miranda against her body. Her bereaved heart went out to the child. Her swollen teats, too, were hotly aching, and she had a kind of hope that Miranda would ease that hurt. But this, of course, never came within the scope of the child's remotest idea. In every other respect, however, she showed herself most appreciative of Kroof's attentions, stroking her with light little hands, and murmuring to her much musical endearment, to which Kroof lent earnest ear. Then, laying her head on the fine fur of the bear's belly, she suddenly went fast asleep, being wearied by her wanderings and her emotions.

Late in the afternoon, towards milking time, Kirstie aroused herself. She sat up with a startled air in her bunk in the corner of the cabin. Through the window came the rays of the westering sun. She felt troubled at having been so long asleep. And where could Miranda be? She arose, tottering for a moment, but soon found herself steady; and then she realized that she had slept off a sickness. She went to the door. The hens were diligently scratching in the dust, and Saunders eyed her with tolerance. At the fence beyond the barn the black-and-white cow lowed for the milking; and from her tether at the other side of the buckwheat-field Michael, the calf, bleated for her supper of milk and hay tea. But Miranda was nowhere to be seen.

"Miranda!" she called. And then louder,—and yet louder,—and at last with a piercing wail of anguish, as it burst upon her that Miranda was gone. The sunlit Clearing, the gray cabin, the dark forest edges, all seemed to whirl and swim about her for an instant. It was only for an instant. Then she snatched up the axe from the choppinglog, and with a sure instinct darted into that tongue of fir-woods just behind the house.

Straight ahead she plunged, as if following a plain trail, though in truth she was little learned in woodcraft, and by her mere eyes could have scarce tracked an elephant. But her heart was clutched by a grip of ice, and she went as one tranced. All at once, however, over the mossy crest of a rock she saw a sight which brought her to a standstill. Her eyes and her mouth opened wide in sheer amazement. Then the terrible tension relaxed. A strong shudder passed through her, and she was her steadfast self again. A smile broke up the sober lines of her face.

"Sure enough," she muttered, "the child was right. She knows a sight more about the beasts than what I do."

And this was what she saw. Through the hoary arcades of the fir-wood walked a huge black bear, with none other than Miranda trotting by its side and playfully stroking its rich coat. The great animal would pause from time to time, merely to nuzzle at the child with its snout, or lick her hand with its narrow red tongue, but the course it was making was straight for the cabin. Kirstie stood motionless for some minutes watching the strange scene, then, stepping out from her shelter, she hastened after them. So engrossed were they with each

other that she came up undiscovered to within some twenty paces of them. Then she called out,—

"Miranda, where have you been?"

The child stopped, looked around, but still clung to Kroof's fur.

"Oh, mother!" she cried, eager and breathless, and trying to tell everything at once; "I was all lost,—and I was just going to be eaten up,—and the dear, good, big bear came and frightened the panther away;—and we were just going home;—and do come and speak to the dear, lovely, big bear! Oh, don't let it go away, don't let it!"

But on this point Kroof had her own views. It was Miranda she had adopted, not Kirstie, and she felt a kind of jealousy of Miranda's mother. Even while Miranda was speaking the bear swung aside and briskly shambled off, leaving the child half in tears.

It was a thrilling story which Miranda had to tell her mother that evening, while the black-and-white cow was getting milked, and while Michael, the calf, was having its supper of milk and hay tea. It made a profound impression on Kirstie's quick and tolerant mind. She at once realized the value to Miranda of such an affection as Kroof's. Most mothers would have been crazed with foolish fear at the situation, but Kirstie Craig was of no such weak stuff; she saw in it only a strong shield for Miranda against the gravest perils of the wood.

VII.

THE INTIMATES.

AFTER this experience Miranda felt herself initiated, as she had so longed to be, into the full fellowship of the folk of the ancient wood. Almost every day Kroof came prowling about the edges of the Clearing. Miranda was sure to catch sight of her before long, and run to her with joyous caresses. Farther than a few steps into the open the big bear would not come, having no desire to cultivate Kirstie, or the cabin, or the cattle, or aught that appertained to civilization. But Kirstie, after watching from a courteous distance a few of these strange interviews, wisely gave the child a little more latitude. Miranda was permitted to go a certain fixed distance into the wood, but never so far as to quite lose sight of the cabin, and this permission was only for such times as she was with Kroof. Kirstie knew something about wild animals, and she knew that the black bear, when it formed an attachment, was inalienably and uncalculatingly loyal to it.

As sometimes happens in an affection which runs counter to the lines of kinship, Kroof seemed more passionately devoted to the child than she had been to her own cub. She would gaze with eyes of rapture, her mouth hanging half open in foolish fondness, while Miranda, playing about her, acquired innumerable secrets of forest-lore. What-

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soever Miranda wanted her to do she would strive to do as soon as she could make out what it was,—for, in truth, Miranda's speech, though very pleasant to her ear, was not very intelligible to her brain. On one point, however, she was inflexible. Perhaps for a distance of thrice her own length she would follow Miranda out into the Clearing. But farther than that she would not go. Persuasions, petulance, arguments, tears,—Miranda tried them all, but all in vain. When Miranda tried going behind and pushing, or going in front and pulling, the great beast liked it, and her eyes would blink humorously. But her mind was made up. This obstinacy, so disappointing to Miranda, met with Kirstie's unqualified but unexpressed approval. She did not want Kroof's ponderous bulk hanging about the house, or loafing around and getting in her way when she was at work in the fields.

Though Kroof was averse to civilization, she was at the same time sagacious enough to see that she could not have Miranda always with her in the woods. She knew very well that the tall woman with red on her head was a very superior and mysterious kind of animal, and that Miranda was her cub,-a most superior kind of cub, and always to be regarded with a secret awe, but still a cub, and belonging to the tall woman. Therefore she was not aggrieved when she found that she could not have Miranda with her in the woods for more than an hour or two at a time. In that hour or two, however, much could be done, and Kroof tried to teach Miranda many things which it is held good to know among the folk of the ancient wood. She would sniff at the mould and dig up sweet-smelling roots; and Miranda, observing the stems and leaves of them, soon came to know all the edible roots of the neighborhood. Kroof showed her, also, the delicate dewberry, the hauntingly delicious capillaire, hidden under its trailing vines, the insipidly sweet Indian pear, and the harmless, but rather cottonwoolly, partridge-berry; and she taught her to shun the tempting purple fruit of the trillium, as well as the deadly snake-berry. The blueberry, dear alike to bears and men, did not grow in the heavytimbered forest, but Miranda had known that fruit well from those earliest days in the Settlement, when she had so often stained her mouth with blueberry pie. As for the scarlet clusters of the pigeonberry, carpeting the hillocks of the pasture, Miranda needed no teaching from Kroof to know that these were good. Then there were all sorts of forest fungi of many shapes and colors,—white, pink, delicate vellow, shining orange covered with warts, creamy drab, streaky green, and even strong crimson. "Toadstools" Miranda called them all at first, with undiscriminating dread and aversion. But Kroof taught her better. Some, indeed, the red ones and the warty ones in particular, the wise animal would dash to pieces with her paw, and these Miranda understood to be bad. In fact, their very appearance had something

ominous in it, and to Miranda's eye they had poison written all over them in big letters. But there was one very white and dainty looking, sweet-smelling fungus which she would have sworn to as virtuous. As soon as she saw it she thought of a peculiarly shy mushroom,—she loved mushrooms,—and ran to pick it up in triumph. But Kroof thrust her aside with such rudeness that she fell over a stump, much offended. Her indignation died away, however, as she saw Kroof tearing and stamping the pale mushrooms to minutest fragments with every mark of loathing. From this Miranda gathered that the beautiful toadstool was a very monster of crime. It was, indeed, for it was none other than the deadly Amanita, one small morsel of which would have hushed Miranda into the sleep which does not wake.

Though Miranda was safe under Kroof's tutelage, it was perhaps just as well for her at that period of her youth that she was forbidden to stray from the Clearing. For there was, indeed, one tribe among the folk of the wood against whose anger Kroof's protection would have very little availed. Had Miranda gone roaming, she and Kroof, they might have found a bee-tree. It is doubtful if Kroof's sagacity would have told her that Miranda's skin was not adequate to an enterprise against bee-trees. The zealous bear, probably, would have wanted honey for the child, and the result would have been such as to shake Kirstie's confidence in Kroof's judgment.

There were, however, several well-inhabited ant-logs in that narrow circuit which Miranda was allowed to tread, and on a certain afternoon Kroof discovered one of these. She was much pleased. Here was a chance to show Miranda something very nice and very good for her health. Having attracted the child's attention, she ripped the rotten log to its heart, and began licking up the swarming insects and plump, white larvæ together. Here was a treat. But the incomprehensible Miranda, with a shuddering scream, ran away. Kroof was bewildered. She finished the ants, however, while she was about it. Whereafter she was called upon to hear a long lecture from Miranda, to the effect that ants were not good to eat, and that it was very cruel to tear open their nests and steal their eggs. Of course, as Kroof did not at all understand what she was driving at, there was no room for an argument, which, considering the points involved, is much to be regretted.

Though Miranda had now, so to speak, the freedom of the wood, she was not really intimate with any of the furtive folk,—saving only, of course, the irrepressible squirrels who lived in the cabin roof. She saw the wild creatures now very close at hand, and they went about their business under her eye without concern. They realized that it was no use trying with her their game of invisibility. No matter how perfect their stillness, no matter how utterly they made themselves one with their surroundings, they felt her clear, unwavering, friendly

eyes look them through and through. This was at first a troubling mystery to them. Who was this youngling,—for youth betrays itself even to the most primitive perceptions,—who, for all her youth, set their traditions and elaborate devices so easily at naught? Their instincts told them, however, that she was no foe to even the weakest of them; and so they let her see them about their business unabashed,

though avoiding her with a kind of careful awe.

Kroof, too, they all avoided, but with a difference. They knew that she was not averse to an occasional meal of flesh-meat, but that she would not greatly trouble herself in pursuit of it. All they had to do, these lesser folk of the wood, was to keep at a safe distance from the sweep of her mighty paw, and they felt at ease in her neighborhood: all but the hare,-he knew that Kroof considered him and his longeared children a special delicacy, well worth the effort of a bear. Miranda wondered why she never could see anything of the hare when she was out with Kroof. She did see him sometimes, indeed, but always at a distance, and for an instant only. On these occasions Kroof did not see him at all, and Miranda soon came to realize that she could see more clearly than even the furtive folk themselves. They could hide themselves from each other, by stillness and by self-effacement; but Miranda's eyes always inexorably distinguished the ruddy fox from the yellow-brown, rotten log on which he flattened himself. She instantly differentiated the moveless nut-hatch from the knot on the trunk, the squatting grouse from the lichened stone, the wood-mouse from the curled brown leaf, the crouching wild-cat from the mottled branch. Consequently the furtive folk gradually began to pay her the tribute of ignoring her,-which meant that they trusted her to let them alone. They kept their reserve; but under her interested scrutiny the nut-hatch would walk up the rough-barked pine-trunk and pick insects out from under the gray scales; the golden-winged woodpecker would hunt down the fat white grubs which he delighted in, and hammer sharply on the dead wood a few feet above her head; the slim brown stoat would chase beetles among the tree-roots untroubled by her discreet proximity; the beruffed cock-grouse would drum from the top of his stump till the air was full of the soft thunder of his boastings, and the half-grown brood would dust themselves in the deserted ant-hill in the sunniest corner of the Clearing. Only the pair of crows which, seeing great opportunities about the reoccupied Clearing, had taken up their dwelling in the top of a tall spruce close behind the cabin, held suspiciously aloof from Miranda. They often talked her over in harsh tones that jarred the ancient stillness, and they considered her intimacy with Kroof altogether contrary to the order of things. Being themselves exemplars of duplicity, they were quite convinced that Miranda had ulterior motives too deep for them

to fathom, and they therefore respected her immensely. But they did not trust her, of course. The shy rain-birds, however, trusted her, and would whistle to each other their long, melancholy calls, foretelling rain, even though she were standing within a few steps of them and staring at them with all her might. And this was a most unwonted favor on the part of the rain-birds, who are too reticent to let themselves be heard when any one is near enough to see them. There might be three or four, uttering their slow, inexpressibly pathetic cadences all around the Clearing; but Kirstie could never catch a glimpse of them, though many a time she listened, with deep longing in her heart, as their remote voices thrilled across the dewy oncoming of the dusk.

Miranda saw the panther only once again that year. It was about a month after her meeting with Kroof. She was alone, just upon the edge of the buckwheat field, and peering into the shadowy, transparent stillness to see what she could see. What she saw sent her little heart straight up into her mouth. There, not a dozen paces from her, lying flat along a fallen tree, was the panther. He was staring at her with his eyes half shut. Startled though she was, Miranda's experience with Kroof had made her very self-confident. She stood moveless. staring back into those dangerous, half-shut eyes. After a moment or two the beautiful beast arose and stretched himself with great deliberation, reaching out and digging in his claws as an ordinary cat does when it stretches. At the same time he yawned prodigiously, so that it seemed to Miranda he would surely split to his ears, and she looked right into his great pink throat. Then he stepped lightly down from the tree on the side farthest from Miranda and walked away with the air of not wishing to intrude.

That same summer, too, so momentous in its events, Miranda first met Wapiti, the delicate-antlered buck, and Ganner, the big Canada lynx. Needless to say, they were not in company. One morning, as she sat in a fence-corner, absorbed in building a little house of twigs around a sick butterfly, she heard a loud snort just at her elbow. Much startled, she gave a little cry as she looked up, and something jumped back from the fence. She saw a bright-brown head, crowned with splendid, many-pronged antlers, and a pair of large, liquid eyes looking at her with mild wonder.

"Oh, you be-autiful deer, did I frighten you?" she cried, knowing the visitor by pictures she had seen, and she poked her little hand through the fence in greeting. The buck seemed very curious about the scarlet ribbon at her neck, and eyed it steadily for half a minute. Then he came close up to the fence again and sniffed at her hand with his fine black nostrils, opening and closing them sensitively. He let her stroke his smooth muzzle, and held his head quite still under the caressing of her hand. Then some unusual sound caught his ear.

It was Kirstie hoeing potatoes near by, and presently the furrow she was following brought her into view behind the corner of the barn. The scarlet kerchief on her head flamed hotly in the sun. The buck raised his head high and stared, and finally seemed to decide that the apparition was a hostile one. With a snort, and an impatient stamp of his polished hoof, he wheeled about and trotted off into the wood.

Her introduction to Ganner, the lynx, was under less gracious

auspices.

Michael, the calf, who had been growing excellently all summer, was kept tethered during the daytime to a stake in a corner of the wild-grass meadow, about fifty yards from the edge of the forest. A little nearer the cabin was a long thicket of blackberry brakes and elder-bushes and wild clematis, forming a dense tangle, in which Miranda had with great pains and at the cost of terrific scratches formed herself a delectable hiding-place. Here she would play house and sometimes take a nap in the hot mornings, while her mother would be at work acres away, at the very opposite side of the Clearing.

One day, about eleven in the morning, Michael was lying at the limit of her tether nearest the cabin, when she saw a strange beast come out of the forest and halt to look at her. The animal was of a grayish, rusty brown, very pale on the belly and neck, and nearly as tall as Michael herself, but its body was curiously short in proportion to the length of its powerful legs. It had a perfectly round face, with round, glaring eyes, long, stiff, black tufts on the tips of its sharp-pointed ears, and a fierce-looking, whitish-brown whisker brushed away, as it were, from under its chin. Its tail was a mere thick brown stump of a tail, looking as if it had been chopped off short. The creature gazed all around warily, then crouched low, its hind-quarters rather higher in the air than its fore-shoulders, and, stepping softly, came straight for Michael.

Inexperienced as Michael was, she knew that this was nothing less than death itself approaching her. She sprang up, her awkward legs spread wide apart, her whole weight straining on the tether, her eyes, rolling white, fixed with horror on the dreadful object. From her

throat came a long, shrill bleat of appeal and despair.

There was no mistaking that cry. It brought Miranda from her playhouse in an instant. In the next instant she took in the situation. "Mother! Mothe-e-er!" she screamed at the top of her voice, and flew to the defence of her beloved Michael.

The lynx at this unexpected interference stopped short. Miranda did not look formidable, and he was not alarmed by any means. But she looked unusual, and that bit of bright red at her throat might mean something which he did not understand, and there was something not quite natural, something to give him pause, in a youngster displaying

this reckless courage. For a second or two, therefore, he sat straight up like a cat, considering, and his tufted ears the while very erect, with the strange whiskers under his chin, gave him an air that was fiercely dignified. His hesitation, however, was but for a moment. Satisfied that Miranda did not count, he came on again more swiftly, and Miranda, seeing that she had failed to frighten him away, just flung her arms around Michael's neck and screamed.

That scream should have reached Kirstie's ears across the whole breadth of the Clearing, but a flaw of wind carried it away, and the cabin intervened to dull its edge. Other ears than Kirstie's, however, heard it,-heard, too, and understood, Michael's bleating. The blackand-white cow was far away, in another pasture. (Kirstie saw her running frantically up and down along the fence, and thought the flies were tormenting her.) But just behind the thicket lay the two steers, Bright and Star, contemplatively chewing their mid-day cud. Both had risen heavily to their feet at Michael's first appeal. Miranda's scream rang out, Bright's sorrel head appeared around the corner of the thicket, anxious to investigate. He stopped at sight of Ganner, held his muzzle high in air, snorted loudly, and shook his head with a great show of valor. Immediately after him came Star, the black-and-white brindle. But of a different temper was he. The moment his eyes fell upon Michael's foe, and Miranda's, down went his long, straight horns, up went his brindled tail, and with a bellow of rage he charged.

The gaunt steer was an antagonist whom Ganner had no stomach to face. With an angry snarl, which showed Miranda a terrifying set of white teeth in a very red mouth, he turned his stump of a tail, laid flat his tufted ears, and made for the forest with long, splendid leaps, his exaggerated hind legs seeming to volley him forward like a ball. In about five seconds he was out of sight among the trees, and Star, snorting and switching his tail, stood pawing the turf haughtily in front of Miranda and Michael.

It was Miranda who named the big lynx "Ganner" that day, because, as she told her mother afterwards, that was what he said when Star came and drove him away.

VIII.

AXE AND ANTLER.

The next winter went by in the main much like the former one. But more birds came to be fed as the season advanced, because Miranda's fame had gone abroad amongst them. The snow was not so deep, the cold not so severe. No panther came again to claw at their roof by night. But there were certain events which made the season

stand out sharply from all others in the eyes of both Kirstie and Miranda.

Throughout December and January Wapiti, the buck, with two slim does accompanying him, would come and hang about the barn for several days at a time, nibbling at the scattered straw. With the two steers, Star and Bright, Wapiti was not on very good terms. They would sometimes thrust at him resentfully, whereupon he would jump aside, as if on springs, stamp twice sharply with his polished fore-hoofs, and level at them the fourteen threatening spear-points of his antlers. But the challenge never came to anything. As for the black-and-white cow, she seemed to admire Wapiti greatly, though he met her admiration with the most lofty indifference. One day Miranda let him and the two does lick some coarse salt out of a dish, after which enchanting experience all three would follow her straight up to the cabin door. They even took to following Kirstie about, which pleased and flattered her more than she would acknowledge to Miranda, and earned them many a cold buckwheat pancake. To them the cold pancakes, though leathery and tough, were a tidbit of delight; but along in January they tore themselves away from such raptures and removed to other feeding-grounds.

Towards spring, to Miranda's great delight, she made acquaintance with Ten-Tine, the splendid bull caribou, whom she had just seen the winter before. He and his antlered cows were migrating southward by slow stages. They were getting tired of the dry moss and lichen of the barrens which lay a week's journey northward from the Clearing. They began to crave the young shoots of willow and poplar that would now be bursting with sap along the more southerly streams. Looking from the window one morning, before the cattle had been let out, Miranda saw Ten-Tine emerge from the woods and start with long, swinging strides across the open. His curiously flattened, leaf-like antlers lay back on a level with his shoulders, and his nose pointed straight before him. The position was just the one to enable him to go through the woods without getting his horns entangled. From the middle of his forehead projected, at right angles to the rest of the antlers, two broad, flat, palmated prongs, a curious enlargement of the central ones. His cows, whose antlers were little less splendid than his own, but lacking in the frontal projection, followed at his heels. In color he was of a very light, whitish drab, quite unlike the warm brown of Wapiti's coat.

In passing the barn Ten-Tine caught sight of some tempting fodder, and stopped to try it. Kirstie's straw proved very much to the taste of the whole herd. While they were feeding delightedly, Miranda stole out to make friends with them. She took, as a tribute, a few handfuls of the hens' buckwheat in a bright yellow bowl. As she approached, Ten-Tine lifted his fine head and eyed her curiously. Had it been the rutting season, he would no doubt have straightway challenged her to mortal combat. But now, unless he saw a wolf, a panther; or a lynx, he was good-tempered and inquisitive. This small creature looked harmless, and there was undoubtedly something quite remarkable about her. What was that shining thing which she held out in front of her? And what was that other very bright thing around her neck? He stopped feeding and watched her intently, his head held in an attitude of indecision, just a little lower than his shoulders. The cows took a look also and felt curious, but were concerned rather to satisfy their hunger than their curiosity. They left the matter easily to Ten-Tine.

Miranda had learned many things already from her year among the folk of the wood. One of these things was that all the furtive folk dreaded and resented rough movement. Their manners were always beyond reproach. The fiercest of them moved ever with an aristocratic grace and poise. They knew the difference between swiftness and haste. All abruptness they abhorred. In lines of beauty they eluded their enemies. They killed in curves.

She did not, therefore, attempt to go straight up and take Ten-Tine's acquaintance by storm. She paused discreetly some dozen steps away, held out the dish to him, and murmured her inarticulate, soft persuasions. Not being versed in the caribou tongue, she trusted the tones of her voice to reveal her good intention.

Seeing that she would come no nearer, Ten-Tine's curiosity refused to be balked. But he was dubious—very dubious. Like Wapiti, he stamped when he was in doubt; but the hoofs he stamped with were much larger, broader, clumsier, less polished than Wapiti's, being formed for running over such soft surfaces as bog-land and snow insufficiently packed, where Wapiti's trim feet would cut through like knives.

Step by step he drew nearer. There was something in Miranda's clear gaze that gave him confidence. At length he was near enough to touch the yellow bowl with his flexible upper lip. He saw that the bowl contained something. He extended his muzzle over the rim, and, to Miranda's surprise, blew into it! The grain flew in every direction, some of it sticking to his own moist lips. He drew back a little startled. Then he licked his lips, and he liked the taste. Back went his muzzle into the interesting bowl, and after sniffing again very gently, he licked up the whole contents.

"Oh, Greedy!" exclaimed Miranda in tender rebuke, and started back to the cabin to get him some more.

"Wouldn't Saunders be cross," she thought to herself, "if he knew I was giving his buckwheat to the nice deer?"

Ten-Tine followed close behind her, sniffing inquisitively at the red ribbon on her neck. When Miranda went in for the buckwheat he tried to enter with her, but his antlers had too much spread for the doorway. Kirstie, who was busy sweeping, looked up in amazement as the great head darkened her door.

"Drat the child!" she exclaimed; "she'll be bringing all the

beasts of the wood in to live with us afore long!"

She did not grudge Ten-Tine the few handfuls of buckwheat, however, though he blew half of it over the floor, so that she had to sweep it up. When he had finished, and perceived that no more was forthcoming, he backed off reluctantly from the door and began smelling around the window-sill, pushing his curious nose tentatively

against the glass.

Now it chanced that all the way down from the barrens Ten-Tine and his little herd had been hungrily pursued, although they did not know it. Four of the great gray timber wolves were on their track. Savage, but prudent, the wolves were unwilling to attack the herd, for they knew the caribou's fighting prowess. But they awaited a chance to cut off one of the cows and hunt her down alone. For days they had kept the trail, faring very scantily by the way, and now they were both ravenous and enraged. Emerging from the woods, they saw the five cows at feed by the barn, with Ten-Tine nowhere in sight. The epportunity was too rare a one to miss. They seized it. All four gaunt forms abreast, they came galloping across the snow in silence, their long, gray snouts wrinkled, their jaws open, their white fangs uncovered, their gray and white shoulders rising and falling in unison, their cloudy tails floating straight out behind them.

Just in time the cows saw them coming. There was a half second of motionless consternation. Then nimbly they sprang into a circle, hind-quarters bunched together, levelled antlers all pointing outward.

It was the accurate inherited discipline of generations.

Without a sound, save a deep, gasping breath, the wolves made their leap, striving to clear that bayonet hedge of horns. Two were hurled back, yelping. One brought a cow to her knees, half clear of the circle, his fangs in her neck, and would have finished her but that her next neighbor prodded him so fiercely in the flank that he let go with a shrill snarl. But the fourth wolf found the weak point in the circle. The foolish young cow upon whom he sprang went wild at once with fright. She broke from the ring and fled. The next instant the wolf was at her throat.

The moment he pulled her down the other wolves sprang upon her. The rest of the cows, maintaining their position of defence, viewed her plight with considerable unconcern, doubtless holding that her folly was well served and that she was worth no better end. But Ten-

Tine, who had suddenly taken in the situation, had other views about it. To him the foolish young cow was most important. With a shrill note of rage, half bleat, half bellow, he charged down to the rescue. The first wolf he struck was hurled against the corner of the barn, and came limping back to the fray with no great enthusiasm. Upon the next he came down with both front feet, fairly breaking the creature's back. Instantly the other two fastened upon his flanks, trying to pull him down, while he, bounding and rearing, strove heroically to shake them off in order to reach them with horns and hoofs. The bleeding cow meanwhile struggled to her feet and took refuge within the dauntless circle, which rather grudgingly opened to admit her. For this they must not be judged too harshly, for in caribou eyes she had committed the crime of crimes in breaking ranks and exposing the whole herd to destruction.

At this stage in the encounter the valiant Ten-Tine found himself in desperate straits, but help came from an unexpected quarter. The element which the wolves had not allowed for was Kirstie Craig. At the first sight of them Kirstie had been filled with silent rage. She had believed that wolves were quite extinct throughout all the neighboring forests, and now in their return she saw a perpetual menace. But at least they were scarce, she knew that,—and on the instant she resolved that this little pack should meet no milder fate than extermination.

"It's wolves! Don't you stir outside this door!" she commanded grimly, in that voice which Miranda never dreamed of disobeying. Miranda, trembling with excitement, her eyes wide and her cheeks white, climbed to the window and flattened her face against it. Kirstie rushed out, slamming the door.

As she passed the chopping-block Kirstie snatched up her axe. Her fine face was set like iron. Her deep black eyes blazed fury. It was a desperate venture, to attack three maddened wolves, with no ally to support her save a caribou bull, but Kirstie, as we have seen, was not a woman for half measures.

The first sweep of that poised and practised axe caught the nearest wolf just back of the fore-quarters, and almost shore him in two. Thus suddenly freed on one side, Ten-Tine wheeled like lightning to catch his other assailant, but the animal sprang back. In evading Ten-Tine's horns, he almost fell over Kirstie, who, thus balked of her full deadly swing, just managed to fetch him a short stroke under the jaw with the flat of the blade. It was enough, however, to fell him for an instant, and that instant was enough for Ten-Tine. Bounding into the air, the big caribou came down with both sharp fore-hoofs, like chisels, squarely on the middle of his adversary's ribs. The stroke was slaughterously decisive. Ribs of steel could not have endured

it, and in a very few seconds the shape of bloody gray fur upon the snow bore scant resemblance to a wolf.

The last of the pack, who had been lamed by Ten-Tine's onslaught, had prudently drawn off when he saw Kirstie coming. Now he turned tail. Kirstie, determined that not one should escape, gave chase. She could run as can few women. She was bent on her grim purpose of extermination. At first the wolf's lameness hindered him, but just as he was about to turn at bay and fight dumbly to the death, after the manner of his kind, the effort which he had been making loosened his strained muscles, and he found his pace. Stretching himself out on his long gallop, he shot away from his pursuer as if she had been standing still.

Kirstie stopped, swung her axe, and hurled it after him with all her strength. It struck the mark. Had it struck true, edge on, it would have fulfilled her utmost intention; but it struck with the thick of the head, squarely upon the brute's rump. The blow sent him rolling end over end across the snow. He yelped with astonishment and terror, but, recovering himself again in a second, he went bounding like a gray ball of fur over a brush heap, and vanished down the forest arches.

When Kirstie turned round she saw Miranda, white, pitiful, and bewildered, in the doorway; while Ten-Tine and his cows, without waiting to thank her, were trotting away across the white fields, their muzzles thrust far forward, their antlers laid along their backs. From Ten-Tine himself, and from the wounded young cow, the blood dripped scarlet and steaming at every stride.

IX.

THE PAX MIRANDÆ.

AFTER this experience Kirstie would have been more anxious than before about Miranda, had it not been for the child's remarkable friendship with the great she bear. As soon as the snow was gone, and the ancient wood again began to lure Miranda with its mystic stillness and transparent twilight, Kroof reappeared, as devoted as ever. When Kroof was absent, the woods were to the child a forbidden realm, into which she could only peer with longing and watch the furtive folk with those initiated eyes of hers.

A little later, when the mosses were dry, and when the ground was well heartened with the fecundating heats of June, Miranda had further proof of her peculiar powers of vision. One day she and Kroof came upon a partridge hen with her new-hatched brood at the edge of a thicket of young birches. The hen went flopping and fluttering off among the trees, as if sorely wounded, and Kroof, convinced of a

speedy capture, followed eagerly. She gave a glance about her first, however, to see if there were any partridge chicks in the neighborhood. To Miranda's astonishment, the wise animal saw none. But Miranda saw them distinctly. There they were all about her, moveless little brown balls, exactly like the leaves and the moss and the scattered things of the forest floor. Some were half hidden under a leaf or twig; some squatted in the utter open, just in the positions in which the alarm had found them. They shut their eyes, even, to make themselves more at one with their surroundings. They would have endured any fate, they would have died on the spot, rather than move, so perfect was their baby obedience to the partridge law. This obedience had its reward. It gave them invisibility to all the folk of the wood, friends and foes alike. But there was no such thing as deceiving Miranda's eves. She was not concerned about the mother partridge, because she saw through her pretty trick and knew that Kroof could never catch her; -indeed, in her innocence she did not think good Kroof would hurt her if she did catch her. But these moveless chicks, on the other hand, were interesting. One-two-three-Miranda counted ten of them, and there were more about somewhere, she imagined. Presently the mother bird came flopping around in a circle to see how things were going. She saw Miranda stoop and pick up one of the precious brown balls, and then another, curiously but gently. In her astonishment the distracted bird forgot Kroof for a second and was almost caught. Escaping this peril by a sudden wild dash, and realizing that from Miranda there was no concealment, she flew straight into the densest part of the thicket and gave a peremptory call. At the sound each little motionless ball came to life. The two that were lying as if dead on Miranda's outstretched palms hopped to the ground, and all darted into the thicket. A few low but sharply articulated clucks, and the motherbird led her brood off swiftly through the bush, while Kroof, somewhat crestfallen, came shambling back to Miranda.

All this time, in spite of the affair of the wolves, the attack of Ganner, the lynx, on Michael, and that tell-tale spot of blood and fur on the snow, where the owl had torn the hare for his midnight feast, Miranda had regarded the folk of the ancient wood as a gentle people, living for the most part in a voiceless amity. Her seeing eyes quite failed to see the unceasing tragedy of the stillness. She did not guess that the furtive folk, whom she watched about their business, went always with fear at their side and death lying in wait at every turn. She little dreamed that, for most of them, the very price of life itself was the ceaseless extinguishing of life.

It was during the summer that Miranda found her first and only flaw in Kroof's perfections,—for Kroof she regarded as second only to her mother among created beings. On one memorable day, when she ran across the fields to meet Kroof at the edge of the wood, the great bear was too much occupied to come forward as usual. She was sniffing at something on the ground which she held securely under one of her huge paws. Miranda ran forward to see what it was.

To her horror, it was the warm and bleeding body of a hare.

She shrank back, sickened at the sight. Then, in flaming indignation, she struck Kroof again and again in the face with the palms of her little hands. Kroof was astonished,—temperately astonished, for she always knew Miranda was peculiar. She lifted her snout high in the air to escape the blows, shut her eyes, and meekly withdrew the

offending paw.

"Oh, Kroof, how could you? I hate you, bad Kroof! You are just like the wolves!" cried Miranda, her little bosom bursting with wrath and tears. Kroof understood that she was in grievous disgrace. Carrying the dead hare with her, Miranda ran out into the potato-patch, fetched the hoe, returned to the spot where the bear still sat in penitential contemplation, and proceeded in condemnatory silence to dig a hole right under Kroof's nose. Here she buried the hare, tenderly smoothing the ground above it. Then, throwing the hoe down violently, she flung her arms about Kroof's neck and burst into a passion of tears.

"How could you do it, Kroof?" she sobbed; "oh, perhaps you'll be

wanting to eat up Miranda some day!"

Kroof suffered herself to be led away from the unhappy spot. Soon Miranda grew calm, and the painful scene seemed forgotten. The rest of the afternoon was spent very pleasantly in eating wild raspberries along the farther side of the Clearing. To Kroof's mind it gradually became clear that her offence lay in killing the hare; and as it was obvious that Miranda liked hares, she resolved never to offend again in this respect, at least while Miranda was anywhere in the neighborhood. After Miranda had gone home, however, the philosophical Kroof strolled back discreetly to where the hare was buried. She dug it up, and ate it with great satisfaction; and afterwards she smoothed down the earth again, that Miranda might not know.

After this trying episode Miranda had every reason to believe that Kroof's reformation was complete. Little by little, as month followed month, and season followed season, and year rolled into year at the quiet cabin in the Clearing, Miranda forgot the few scenes of blood which had been thrust upon her. The years now little varied one from another, yet to Miranda the life was not monotonous. Each season was for her full of events, full of tranquil uneventfulness for Kirstie. The cabin became more homelike, as currant and lilac bushes grew up around it, a green, sweet covert for birds, and abundant scarlet-blossomed bean-vines mantled the barrenness of its weathered logs. The Clearing prospered. The stock increased. Old Dave hardly ever vis-

ited at the Clearing but he went back laden with stuff to sell for Kirstie at the Settlement. Among the folk of the forest Miranda's ascendency kept on growing, little by little, till, though none of the beasts came to know her as Kroof did, they all had a tendency to follow her at respectful distance, without seeming to do so. They never killed in her presence, so that a perpetual truce, as it were, came at last to rule within eyeshot of her inescapable gaze. Sometimes the advent of spring would bring Kroof to the Clearing not alone, but with a furry and jolly black morsel of a cub at her side. The cub never detracted in the least from the devotion which she paid to Miranda. It always grew up to young bearhood in more or less amiable tolerance of its mother's incomprehensible friend, only to drift away at last to other feedinggrounds: for Kroof was absolute in her own domain, and suffered not even her own offspring to trespass thereon when once they had reached maturity. Cubs might come, and cubs might go, but the love of Kroof and Miranda was a thing that rested unchanging.

In the winters Miranda now did most of the knitting, while Kirstie wove, on a great clacking loom, the flax which her little farm produced abundantly. They had decided not to keep sheep at the Clearing, lest their presence should lure back the wolves. One warm day towards spring, when old Dave, laden with an ample pack of mittens, stockings, and socks which Miranda's active fingers had fashioned, was slowly trudging along the trail on his way back to the Settlement, he became aware that a pair of foxes followed him. They came not very near, nor did they pay him any marked attention; they merely seemed to "favor his company." as he himself put it. He was thus curiously escorted for perhaps a mile or two, to his great bewilderment,-for he knew no reason why he should be so chosen out for honor in the wood. At another time, when similarly burdened, Wapiti, the buck, came up and sniffed at him very amicably. During the next winter, when he was carrying the same magic merchandise, several hares went leaping beside him, not very near, but as if seeking safety in his presence. The mystery of all this weighed upon him. He was at first half inclined to think that he was haunted, but, fortunately, he took thought to examine the tracks, and so assured himself that his inexplicable companions were of real flesh and blood. Nevertheless, he found himself growing shy of his periodical journeyings through the wood, and at last he opened his mind to Kirstie on the subject.

Kirstie was amused in her grave way.

"Why, Dave," she explained, "didn't you know Miranda was that thick with the wild things she's half wild herself? Weren't you carrying a lot of Miranda's knit stuff when the creatures followed you?"

"That's so, Kirstie," was the old lumberman's reply. "I recollect as how the big buck kep' a-sniffin' at my pack of socks an' mits, too."

"They were some of Miranda's friends, and when they smelled of those mits they thought she was somewheres round, or else they knew you must be a friend of hers."

Thenceforward old Dave always looked for something of a procession in his honor whenever he carried Miranda's knittings to the Settlement, and he was intensely proud of the distinction. He talked about it among his gossips, of course, and therefrom a lot of strange stories began to circulate. It was said by some that Kirstie and Miranda held converse with the beasts in plain English, such as common mortals use, and knew all the secrets of the woods, and much besides that "humans" have no call to know. By others, more superstitious and more fanatical, it was whispered that no mere animals formed the circle of Kirstie's associates, but that spirits, in the guise of hares, foxes, cats, panthers, bears, were her familiars at the solitary cabin. Such malicious tales cost old Dave many a bitter hour, as well as more than one sharp combat, till the gossips learned to keep a bridle on their tongues when he was by. As for young Dave, he had let the Clearing and all its affairs drop from his mind, and, betaking himself to a wild region to the north of the Quah-Davic, was fast making his name as a hunter and trapper. He came but seldom to the Settlement, and when he came he had small ear for the Settlement scandals. His mind was growing large and quiet and tolerant among the great solitudes.

X.

THE ROUTING OF THE PHILISTINES.

In the seventh year of Kirstie's exile something occurred which gave the Settlement gossip a fresh impulse, and added a color of awe to the mystery which surrounded the Clearing.

The winter changed to a very open one, so that long before spring Kroof awoke in her lair under the pine-root: there was not enough snow to keep her warm and asleep. But the ground was frozen, food was scarce, and she soon became hungry. Miranda observed her growing leanness, and tried the experiment of bringing her a mess of boiled beans from the cabin pot. To the hungry bear the beans were a revelation. She realized that Miranda's mother was in some way connected with the experience, and her long reserve melted away in the warmth of her responsive palate. The next day, about noon, as Kirstie and Miranda were sitting down to their meal, Kroof appeared at the cabin door and sniffed longingly at the threshold.

"What's that sniffing at the door?" wondered Kirstie, with some uneasiness in her grave voice. But Miranda had flown at once to the window to look out.

"Why, mother, it's Kroof!" she cried, clapping her hands with de-

light, and before her mother could say a word, she had thrown the door wide open. In shambled the bear forthwith, blinking her shrewd little eyes. She seated herself on her haunches, near the table, and gazed with intent curiosity at the fire. At this moment a dry stick snapped and crackled sharply, whereupon she backed off to a safer distance, but still kept her eyes upon the strange phenomenon.

Both Kirstie and Miranda had been watching her with breathless interest, to see how she would comport herself, but now Miranda broke silence.

"Oh, you dear old Kroof! We're so glad you've come at last to see us!" she cried, rushing over and flinging both arms around the animal's neck. Kirstie's face looked a doubtful endorsement of the welcome. Kroof paid no attention to Miranda's caresses beyond a hasty lick at her ear, and continued to study the fascinating flames. This quietness of demeanor reassured Kirstie, whose hospitality thereupon asserted itself.

"Give the poor thing some buckwheat cakes, Miranda," she said.
"I'm sure she's come because she's hungry."

Miranda preferred to think the visit was due to no such interested motives, but she at once took up a plate of cakes which she had drenched in molasses for the requirements of her own taste. She set the plate on the edge of the table nearest to her visitor, and gently pulled the bear's snout down towards it. No second invitation was needed. The fire was forgotten. The enchanting smell of buckwheat cakes and molasses was a new one to Kroof's nostrils, but the taste for it was there, full grown and waiting. Out went her narrow red tongue. The cakes disappeared rather more rapidly than was consistent with good manners, the molasses was deftly licked up, and with a grin of rapture she looked about for more. Just in front of Kirstie stood a heaping dish of the dainties hot from the griddle. With an eager but tentative paw Kroof reached out for them. This was certainly not manners. Kirstie removed the dish beyond her reach, while Miranda firmly pushed the trespassing paw from the table.

"No, Kroof, you sha'n't have any more at all unless you are good," she admonished, with hortatory finger uplifted.

There are few animals so quick to take a hint as the bear, and Kroof's wits had grown peculiarly alert during her long intimacy with Miranda. She submitted with instant meekness, and waited, with tongue hanging out, while Miranda prepared her a huge bowl of bread and molasses. When she had eaten this, she investigated everything about the cabin, and finally went to sleep on a mat in the corner of the inner room. Before sundown she got up and wandered off to her lair, being still drowsy with winter sleep.

After this the old bear came daily at noon to the cabin, dined with Vol. LXV.-34

Kirstie and Miranda, and dozed away the afternoon on her mat in the chosen corner. Kirstie came to regard her as a member of the household. To the cattle and the poultry she paid no attention whatever. In a few days the oxen ceased to lower their horns as she passed, and the cock, Saunders's equally haughty successor, refrained from the shrill expletives of warning with which he had been wont to herald her approach.

One afternoon, before spring had fairly set in, there came two unwelcome visitors to the cabin. In a lumber-camp some fifteen miles away, on a branch of the Quah-Davic, there had been trouble. Two of the "hands," surly and mutinous all winter, had at last, by some special brutality, enraged the "boss" and their mates beyond all pardon. Hooted and beaten from the camp, they had started through the woods by the shortest road to the Settlement. Their hearts were black with pent-up fury. About three o'clock in the afternoon they happened upon the Clearing and demanded something to eat.

Though sullen, and with a kind of menace in their air, their words were civil enough at first, and Kirstie busied herself to supply what seemed to her their just demands. The laws of hospitality are very binding in the backwoods. Miranda, meanwhile, not liking the looks of the strangers, kept silently aloof and scrutinized them.

When Kirstie had set before them a good meal,—hot tea and hot boiled beans and eggs and white bread and butter,—they were disappointed because she gave them no pork, and they were not slow to demand it.

"I've got none," said Kirstie; "we don't eat pork here. You ought to get along well enough on what's good enough for Miranda and me."

For a backwoods house to be without pork, the indispensable, the universal, the lumberman's staff of life, was something unheard of. They both thought she was keeping back the pork out of meanness.

"You lie!" exclaimed one, a lean, short, swarthy ruffian. The other got up and took a step towards the woman, where she stood, dauntlessly eying them. His scrubby red beard bristled, his massive shoulders hunched themselves ominously towards his big ears.

"You git that pork, and be quick about it!" he commanded, with the addition of such phrases of emphasis as the lumberman uses, but

does not use in the presence of women.

"Beast!" exclaimed Kirstie, eyes and cheeks flaming. "Get out of this house." And she glanced about for a weapon. But in a second the ruffian had seized her. Though stronger than most men, she was no match for him, a noted bully and a cunning master of the tricks of the ring. She was thrown in a second. Miranda, with a scream of rage, snatched up a table-knife and darted to her mother's aid; but the

shorter ruffian, now delighted with the game, shouted, "Settle the old woman, Bill. I'll see to the gal," and made a grab for Miranda.

It had all happened so suddenly that Kirstie was for a moment stunned. Then, realizing the full horror of the situation, a strength as of madness came upon her. She set her teeth into the wrist of her brute assailant with such fury that he yelled and for a second loosed his hold. In that second, tearing herself half free, she clutched his throat with her long and powerful fingers. It was only an instant's respite, but it was enough to divert the other scoundrel's attention from Miranda. With a huge laugh he turned to free his mate from that throttling grip.

His purpose was never fulfilled. Kroof, just at this instant, thrust her nose from the door of the inner room, half awake, and wondering at the disturbance. Her huge bulk was like a nightmare. The swarthy wretch stood for an instant spell-bound in amazement. With a savage growl, Kroof launched herself at him, and he, darting around the table, wrenched the door open and fled.

The other miscreant, though well occupied with Kirstie's mad grip at his throat, had seen from the corners of his eyes that black monster emerge like fate and charge upon his comrade. To him Kroof looked as big as an ox. With a gasping curse he tore himself free, and, hurling Kirstie half across the table, rushed from the cabin. His panic was lest the monster should return and catch him like a rat in a pit, where there was no chance of escape.

As a matter of fact, Kroof was just returning, with an angry realization that her foe could run faster than she could. And lo, here was another of the same breed in the very doorway before her. As she confronted him, his eyes nearly started from his head. With a yell he dodged past, nimble as a loon's neck. Savagely she struck out at him with her punishing paw. Had she caught him there would have been one rogue the fewer, and blood on the cabin threshold. But she missed, and he went free. He ran wildly over the snow-patches in pursuit of his fleeing comrade, while Kroof, all a-bristle with indignation, hurried into the cabin, to be hugged and praised with grateful tears by Kirstie and her Miranda.

When the first of the fugitives, the lean and swarthy one, reached the edge of the woods, he paused to look back. There was no one following but his comrade, who came up a moment later and clutched at him, panting heavily. Neither, for a minute or two, had breath for any word but a broken curse. The big, bristly one called Bill was bleeding at the wrist from Kirstie's bite, and his throat, purple and puffed, bore witness to the strength of Kirstie's fingers. The other had got off scot free. The two stared at each other, cowed and discomfited.

"Ever see the likes o' that?" queried Bill earnestly. .

"Be damned ef 'twa'n't the devil himself!" asseverated his companion.

"Oh, hell! 'twere jest a b'ar!" retorted Bill, in a tone of would-be

derision; "but bigger'n a steer! I don't want none of it!"

"B'ar er devil, what's the odds! Let's git, says I!" was the response; and simultaneously the two lifted their eyes to observe the sun and get their bearings. But it was not the sun they saw. Their jaws fell; their hair rose. For a moment they stood rooted to the ground in abject horror.

Right above their heads, crouched close upon the vast up-sloping limb of a hoary pine, lay a panther, looking down upon them with fixed, dilating stare. They saw his claws, protruding and set firmly into the bark. They saw the backward, snarling curl of his lips as his head reached down towards them over the edge of his perch. For several choking heart-beats the picture bit itself into their coarse brains; then, with a gurgling cry that came as one voice from the two throats, both the ruffians sprang aside like hares and ran wildly down the trail.

Within a few hours of their arrival at the Settlement this was the story on all lips: that Kirstie's cabin was guarded by familiars, who could take upon themselves at will the form of bear, panther, wolf, or mad bull moose for the terrorizing of such travellers as might chance to trespass upon that unholy solitude. The Settlement held a few superstitious souls who believed this tale, while the rest pretended to believe it because it gave them something to talk about. No one, in fact, was at all the worse for it except the ruffian called Bill, who, on one of young Dave's rare visits to the Settlement, got into an argument with him on the subject,—and incidentally got a licking.

XI.

MIRANDA AND YOUNG DAVE.

AFTER this the cabin in the Clearing ran small risk of marauders. To the most sceptical, homespun philosopher in the Settlement it seemed obvious that Kirstie and Miranda had something mysterious about them, and had forsaken their kind for the fellowship of the furtive kin. No one but old Dave had any relish for a neighborhood where bears kept guard, and lynxes slyly frequented, and caribou bulls of a haughty temper made themselves free of the barnyard. As for young Dave, unwilling to fall foul of the folk who were so friendly to Kirstie and Miranda, he carried his traps, his woodcraft, and his cunning rifle to a tract more remote from the Clearing.

Thus it came that Miranda grew to womanhood with no human companion but her mother. To her mother she stood so close that the

two assimilated each other, as it were. Such education as Kirstie possessed, and such culture, narrow but significant, were Miranda's by absorption. For the rest, the quiet folk of the wood insensibly moulded her, and the great silences, and the wide wonder of the skies at night, and the solemnity of the wind. At seventeen she was a woman, mature beyond her years, but strange, with an elfish or a fawn-like strangeness, as if a soul not all human dwelt in her shape. Silent, wild, unsmiling, her sympathies were not with her own kind, but with the wild and silent folk who know not the sweetness of laugh-Yet she was given to moods of singing mirth at long intervals, and her tenderness towards all pain, her horror of blood, were things equally alien to the wilderness creatures, her associates. It was doubtless this unbridgable divergence, combining with her sympathy and subtle comprehension, which secured her mysterious ascendency in the forest, for by this time it would never have occurred to her to step aside even for a panther or a bull-moose in his fury. Something, somehow, in the air about her told all the creatures that she was supreme.

In appearance Miranda was a contrast to her mother, though her coloring was almost the same. Miranda was a little less than middle height, slender, graceful, fine-boned, small of hand and foot, delicatefeatured, her skin toned with the clear browns of health and the open air and the matchless cosmetic of the sun. Her abundance of bronzeblack hair, shot with flame-glints wheresoever the sunlight struck it, came down low over a broad, low forehead. Her eyes, in which, as we have seen, lay very much of her power over the folk of the wood, were very large and dark. They possessed a singular transparency, akin to the magical charm of the forest shadows. There was something unreal and haunting in this inexplicable clarity of her gaze, something of that mystery which dwells in the reflections of a perfect mirror of water. Her nose, straight and well modelled, was rather large than small, with nostrils alertly sensitive to discern all the wilding savors, the clean, personal scents of the clean-living creatures of the wood, and even those inexpressibly elusive perfume-heralds which, on certain days, came upon the air, forerunning the changes of the seasons. Her mouth was large, but not too large for beauty, neither thin nor full, of a vivid scarlet, mobile and mutable, yet firm, and with the edges of the lips exactly defined. Habitually reposeful and selfcontrolled in movement, like her mother, her repose suggested that of a bird poised upon the wing, liable at any instant to incalculable celerities; while that of Kirstie was like the calm of a hill with the eternal disrupting fire at its heart. The scarlet ribbon which Miranda the woman, like Miranda the child, wore always about her neck, seemed in her the symbol of an ineradicable strangeness of spirit, while Kirstie's

scarlet kerchief expressed but the passion which burned perennial beneath its wearer's quietude.

Being in all respects natural and unself-conscious, it is not to be wondered at that Miranda was inconsistent. The truce which she had created about her,—the pax Miranda,—had so long kept her eyes from the hated sight of blood that she had forgotten death, and did not more than half believe in pain. Nevertheless, she was still a shaft of doom to the trout in the lake and river. Fishing was a delight to her. It satisfied some fierce instinct inherited from her forefathers, which she never thought to analyze. The musical rushing of the stream, the foam and clamor of the shallow falls, the deep, black, gleaming pools with the roots of larch and hemlock overhanging, the sullen purple and amber of the eddies with their slowly swirling patches of froth,-all these allured her, though with a threat. And then the stealthy casting of the small baited hook or glittering fly, the tense expectancy, the electrifying tug upon the line, the thrill, the exultation of the landing, and the beauty of the spotted prey, silver and vermilion, on the olive carpet of the moss! It hardly occurred to her that they were breathing, sentient creatures, these fish of the pools. She would doubtless have resented the idea of any kinship between herself and these cold inhabitants of a hostile element. In fact, Miranda was very close to Nature, and she could not escape her part in Nature's never-ceasing war of opposites.

Late one afternoon in summer, Miranda was loitering homeward from the stream with a goodly string of trout. It was a warm day and windless, and the time of year not that which favors the fisherman. But in those cold waters the fish will rise even in July and August, and Miranda's bait, or Miranda's home-tied fly, was always a killing lure to them. She carried her catch,—one gaping-jawed two-pounder and a dozen smaller victims,—strung through the crimson gills on a forked branch of alder. Her dark face was flushed, her hair (she never wore a hat) was dishevelled, her eyes were very wide and abstracted,—taking in the varied shadows, the bowlders, the markings on the bark of the tree-trunks, the occasional flickering moths, and the solemn little brown owl that sat in the cleft of the pine-tree, yet seeming to see not these but something within or beyond them.

Suddenly, however, they were arrested by a sight which scattered their abstraction. Their focus seemed to shorten, their expression concentrated to a strained intensity, then lightened to a grayness with anger as she took a hasty step forward and paused, uncertain for a moment what to do.

Before her was a little open glade, full of sun, secure and inviting. At its farther edge a thick-branched, low beech-tree, reaching out from the confusion of trunks and vistas, cast a pleasant differentiated shade. Here in this shade a young man lay sleeping, sprawled carelessly, his head on one arm. He was tall, gaunt, clad in gray homespuns and a well-worn buckskin jacket. His red-brown hair was cut somewhat short, his light yellow mustache, long and silky, looked the lighter by contrast with the ruddy tan of his face. His rifle leaned against the tree near by, while he slept the luxurious sleep of an idle summer afternoon.

But not five paces away crouched an immense panther, flattened to the ground, watching him.

The beast was ready, at the first movement or sign of life, to spring upon the sleeper's throat. Its tail, rigidly outstretched, twitched slightly at the tip. Its great, luminous eyes were so intently fixed upon the anticipated prey that it did not see Miranda's quiet approach.

To the girl the sleeper seemed something very beautiful, in the impersonal way that a splendid flower, or a tall young tree in the open, or the scarlet-and-pearl of sunrise is beautiful,—not a thing as near to herself as the beasts of the wood, whom she knew. But she was filled with strange, protective fury at the thought of peril to this interesting creature. Her hesitation was but for a moment. She knew the ferocity of the panther very well, and trembled lest the sleeper should move or twitch a muscle. She stepped up close to his side, and fixed the animal's eyes with her disconcerting gaze.

"Get off!" she ordered sharply, with a gesture of command.

The beast had doubtless a very plentiful ignorance of the English language, but gesture is a universal speech. He understood it quite clearly. He faced her eye, and endured it for some seconds, being minded to dispute its authority. Then his glance shifted, his whole attitude changed. He rose from his crouching posture, his tail drooped, his tension relaxed, he looked back over his shoulder, then turned and padded furtively away. Just as he was leaving, the man awoke with a start, sat up, gave one wondering look at Miranda, caught sight of the panther's retreating form, and reached for his rifle.

Quick as light, Miranda intervened. Stepping between his hand and its purpose, she flamed out against him with sudden anger.

"How dare you—go to shoot him!" she cried, her voice trembling. He had sprung to his feet, and was staring at her flushed face with a mixture of admiration and bewilderment.

"But he was goin' to jump on to me!" he protested.

"Well," rejoined Miranda curtly, "he didn't. And you've got no call to shoot him."

"Why didn't he?" queried the young man.

"I drove him off. If I'd thought you'd shoot him, I'd have let him jump on to you," was the cool reply

"Why didn't he jump on to you?" asked the stranger, his keen gray eyes lighting up as if he began to understand the situation.

"Because he durs'n't,—and he wouldn't want to, neither!"

"I calculate," said the stranger, holding out his hand, while a smile softened the thoughtful severity of his face, "that you must be little Mirandy."

"My name is Miranda," she answered, ignoring the outstretched hand, "but I'm sure I don't know who you are, coming here into my

woods to kill my friends."

"I wouldn't hurt a hair of 'em!" he asserted with a mingling of fervor and amusement. "But ain't I one o' your friends, too, Mirandy? I used to be, anyway."

He took a step nearer, still holding out a pleading hand. Miranda

drew back and put her hands behind her.

"I don't know you!" she persisted,—but now with something of an air of wilfulness rather than of hostility. Old memories had begun to stir in forgotten chambers of her brain.

"You used to be friends with young Dave," he said in an eager half whisper. Miranda's beauty, and the strangeness of it, were getting

into his long-untroubled blood.

The girl at once put out her hand with a frank kindness.

"Oh, I remember," she said. "You've been a long time forgetting us, haven't you? But never mind. Come along with me to the Clearing, and see mother, and get some supper."

Dave flushed with pleasure at the invitation.

"Thank ye kindly, Mirandy, I reckon I will," said he, and stepping to one side he picked up his rifle. But at the sight of the weapon Miranda's new friendliness froze up, and a resentful gleam came into her great eyes.

"Let me heft it," she demanded abruptly, holding out an im-

perative hand.

Dave gave it up at once with a deprecating air, though a ghost of a smile flickered under the long yellow droop of his mustache.

Miranda had no interest in the weight or balance of the execrated weapon. Possession of it was all her purpose.

"I'll carry it," she remarked abruptly. "You take these," and handing over to him the string of trout, she turned to the trail.

Dave followed, now at her side, now dropping respectfully behind as the exigencies of the way required. Nothing was said for some time. The girl's instinctive interest in the handsome man whom she had so opportunely protected was now quenched in antagonism, as she thought upon his murderous calling. With sharp resentment she imagined him nursing an indulgent contempt for her friendship with the furry and furtive creatures. She burned with retrospective compassion for all

the beasts which had fallen to his bullets or his blind and brutal traps. A trap was in her eyes the unpardonable horror. Had she not once, when a small girl, seen a lynx,-perhaps it was Ganner himself,caught by the hind-quarters in a dead-fall? The beast was not quite dead,-it had been for days dying. Its eyes were dulled, yet widely staring; and its tongue, black and swollen, stuck out between its grinning jaws. She had seen at once that the case was past relief, and she would have ended the torture had her little hands known how to kill. But helpless and anguished as she was, she had fled from the spot and shudderingly cried her eyes out for an hour. Then it had come over her with a wrenching of remorse that the dreadful tongue craved water, and she had flown back with a tincup of the assuaging fluid, only to find the animal just dead. The pain of thinking that she might have eased its last torment, and had not, bit the whole scene ineffaceably into her heart,-and now, with this handsome trapper, the kind friend of her babyhood, walking at her side, the picture and its pangs returned with a horrible incongruity. But what most of all hardened her heart against the man was a sense of threat which his atmosphere conveyed to her .-- a menace, in some vague way, to her whole system of life, her sympathies, her contentment, her calm.

Dave, on his part, felt himself deep in the cold flood of disfavor, and solicitously pondered a way of return to the sunshine of his companion's smile. His half-wild intuition told him at once that Miranda's anger was connected with his rifle, and he in part understood her aversion to his craft. He hungered to conciliate her, and as he trod noiselessly the scented gloom of the arches, the mottled greens and grays and browns of the trail, he laid his plans with far-considering prudence. It was characteristic of his quietly masterful nature that he not once thought of conciliating by giving up gun and trap and turning to a vocation more humane. No, the ways and means which occupied his thoughts were ways and means of converting Miranda to his own point of view. He felt, though not philosophic enough to formulate it clearly, that he had all Nature behind him to help mould the girl to his will, while she stood not only alone, but with a grave peril of treason in her own heart.

His silence was good policy with Miranda, who was used to silence and loved it. But being a woman, she loved another's silence even better than her own.

"You are a hunter, ain't you?" she inquired at last, without turning her head.

"Yes, Mirandy."

"And a trapper, too?"

"Yes, Mirandy, so they call me."

"And you like to kill the beasts?"

"Well,—yes, Mirandy, kind of. Leastways, I like them; and well, you've jest got to kill them, to live yourself. That's jest what they do,—kill each other, so's they can live themselves. An' it's the only kind of life I can live,—'way in the woods, with the shadows, an' the silence, an' the trees, an' the sky, an' the clean smells, an' the whispers you can't never understand."

Dave shut his mouth with a firm snap at the close of this unwonted outburst. Never to any one before had he so explained his passion for the hunter's life; and now Miranda, who had turned square about, was looking at him with a curious, searching expression. It disconcerted him, and he feared, under those inescapable eyes, that he had talked nonsense. Nevertheless, when she spoke there was a less chilling note in her voice, though the words were not encouraging.

"If you like killing the creatures," she said slowly, "it's no place for you here. So maybe you hadn't better come to the Clearing."

"I don't like killing your beasts, anyways!" he protested eagerly. "An' ever sense I heard how you an' the bears an' the caribou was friends like, I've kep' clear the other side of the divide, an' never set a trap this side the Quah-Davic valley. As for these critters you take such stock in, Mirandy, I wouldn't harm a hair of one of 'em, I swear!"

"You hadn't better! I'd kill you myself," she rejoined sharply, with a swift, dangerous flame in her strange gaze :- " or I'd set Kroof on you," she added, a gleam of mirth suddenly irradiating her face and darkening her eyes richly, till Dave was confused by her loveliness. But he kept his wits sufficiently to perceive, as she set her face again up the trail, that he was permitted to go with her.

"Who's Kroof?" he asked humbly, stepping close to her side and ignoring the fact that the pathway, just there, was but wide enough

for one.

"My best friend," answered Miranda. "You'll see at the Clearing. You'd better look out for Kroof, let me tell you!"

YOUNG DAVE AT THE CLEARING.

DURING the rest of the journey—a matter of an hour's walking there was little talk between Miranda and Dave, for the ancient wood has the property that it makes talk seem trivial. With those who journey through the great vistas and clear twilight of the trees, thoughts are apt to interchange by the media of silence and sympathy, or else to remain uncommunicated. Whatever her misgivings, her resentments and hostilities, Miranda was absorbed in her companion. So deeply was she absorbed that she failed to notice an unwonted emptiness in the shadows about her.

In very truth, the furtive folk had all fled away. The presence of the hunter filled them with instinctive fear, and in their chief defence, their moveless self-effacement, they had no more any confidence while within reach of Miranda's eyes. The stranger was like herself,-and though they trusted her in all else, they knew the compulsion of nature and feared lest she might betray them to her own kind. Therefore they held prudently aloof, the hare and the porcupine, the fox and the red cat, and the raccoon slipped into his hole in the maple-tree, and the wood-mice scurried under the hemlock-root, and the woodpecker kept the thickness of a tree between his foraging and Miranda's eyeshot. Only the careless and inquisitive partridge, sitting on a birch-limb just over the trail, curiously awaited their approach, till suddenly an intuition of peril awoke him, and he fled on wild wings away through the diminishing arches. Even the little brown owl in the pine-crotch snapped his bill and hissed uneasily as the two passed under his perch. Yet all these signs, that would have been to her in other moods a loud proclamation of change, now passed unnoted. Miranda was receiving a new impression, and the experience engrossed her.

Arrived at the edge of the Clearing, Dave was struck by the alteration that had come over it since that day, thirteen years back, when he had aided Kirstie's flight from the Settlement. It was still bleak, and over-brooded by a vast, unroutable stillness, for the swelling of the land lifted it from the forest's shelter and made it neighbor to the solitary sky. But the open fields were prosperous with blue-flowered flax, pink-and-white buckwheat, the green sombreness of potatoes, and the gallant ranks of corn; while half a dozen sleek cattle dotted the stumpy pasture lot. The fences were well kept. The cabin and the barn were hedged about with shining thickets of sun-flower, florid hollyhocks, and scarlet-runner beans. It gave the young woodman a kind of pang, this bit of homely sweetness projected, as it were, upon the infinite solitude of the universe. It made him think, somehow, of the smile of a lost child that does not know it is lost.

Presently, to his astonishment, there rose up from behind a black-berry coppice the very biggest bear he had ever seen. The huge animal paused at sight of a stranger, and sat up on her hind-quarters to inspect him. Then she dropped again upon all fours, shuffled to Miranda's side, and affectionately snuggled her nose into the girl's palm. Dave looked on with smiling admiration. The picture appealed to him. And Miranda, scanning his face with jealous keenness, could detect therein nothing but approval.

"This is Kroof," said she graciously.

"Never seen such a fine bear in all my life!" exclaimed the young man, sincerely enough, and with a rash unmindfulness of the reserve

which governs the manners of all the furtive folk (except the squirrels), he stretched out his hand to stroke Kroof's splendid coat.

The presumption was instantly resented. With an indignant squeal Kroof swung aside and struck at the offending hand, missing it by a hair-breadth as Dave snatched it back out of peril. A flush of anger darkened his face, but he said nothing. Miranda, however, was annoyed. She felt her hospitality dishonored. With a harsh rebuke she slapped the bear sharply over the snout, and drew a little away from her.

Kroof was amazed. Not since the episode of the hare had Miranda struck her, and then the baby hand had conveyed no offence. Now it was different, and she felt that the tall stranger was the cause of the difference. Her heart swelled fiercely within her furry sides. She gave Miranda one look of bitter reproach, and shambled off slowly

down the green alleys of the potato-field.

During some moments of hesitation, Miranda looked from Kroof to Dave and from Dave to Kroof. Then her heart smote her. With a little sob in her throat, she ran swiftly after the bear, and clung to her neck with murmured words of penitence. But Kroof, paying no attention whatever, kept her way steadily to the woods, dragging Miranda as if she had been a bramble caught on her fur. Not till she had reached the very edge of the forest, at the sunny corner where she had been wont to play with Miranda during the far-off first years of their friendship, did the old bear stop. There she turned, sat up on her haunches, eyed the girl's face steadily for some seconds, and then licked her gently on the ear. It meant forgiveness, reconciliation. But Kroof was too deeply hurt to go back with Miranda to the cabin. In response to the girl's persuasions, she but licked her hands assiduously, as if pleading to be not misunderstood, then dropped upon all fours and moved off into the forest, leaving Miranda to gaze after her with tearful eyes.

When she went back to where the young hunter awaited her, Miranda's friendly interest had vanished, and in a chilly silence, very unlike to that which had been eloquent between them a short half hour before, the two walked on up to the cabin. In Kirstie's welcome Dave found all the warmth he could wish, with never a reproach for his long years of neglect—for which, therefore, he the more bitterly reproached himself. The best of all protections against the stings of self-reproach is the reproach of others, and of this protection Kirstie ruthlessly deprived him. She asked about all the details of his life as a solitary trapper, congratulated him on his success, appeared sympathetic towards his calling, and refrained from attempting his conversion to vegetarianism. Looking at her noble figure, her face still beautiful in its strength and calm, the young man harked back in his

memory to the Settlement scandals, and decided that Frank Craig had never of his own will forsaken a woman so altogether gracious and desirable. He resolved that he would come often to the cabin in the Clearing, even if Miranda was unpleasant to him.

Unpleasant she certainly was, all the evening coldly unconscious of his presence, except, of course, at supper, where civility as well as hospitality obliged her to keep his plate supplied and not to sour his meal with an obstinate silence. He watched her stealthily while he talked to her mother; and the fact that her wild and subtle beauty, thrilling his blood, made ridiculous the anger in his heart, did not prevent him accomplishing a brave meal of eggs, steaming buttered pancakes with molasses, and sweet cottage cheese with currant jelly. Kirstie would not hear of his going that night, so he stayed and slept in the bunk which his father had occupied a dozen years before.

In the morning he was diligent to help with the barnyard chores, and won golden comment from Kirstie, but found Miranda still ice to his admiration. About breakfast-time, however, Kroof reappeared, with an air of having quite forgotten the evening's little unpleasantness. Of Dave she took no notice at all, looking through, beyond, and around him, but with her return Miranda's manner became a shade less austere. Her self-reproach was mitigated when she saw that her passing interest in the new-comer had not unpardonably wronged her old friend.

Dave was bound for the Settlement, to arrange some business of bounties and pelt sales. In spite of Kirstie's hospitable arguments, he insisted on setting out as soon as breakfast was over. As he picked up his rifle from the corner beside his bunk, Miranda, as a sign of peace between them, handed him his pouch of bullets. But not so his big bronze powder-flask, on its gay green cord. This she took to the door, and coolly emptied its contents into a near-by clump of burdocks. Then, with an enigmatic smile, she handed back the flask to its owner.

The young hunter was annoyed. Powder was in his eyes a sacred thing. Such a wanton waste of it seemed to him little less than criminal.

"That was all the powder I had 'twixt here an' the Settlement," he said in a tone of rebuke.

"So much the better," said Miranda.

"But I don't see no sense in wastin' it that way," he persisted.

"No knowing what may happen between here and the Settlement," rejoined the girl meaningly.

Dave flushed with anger.

"Didn't I pass ye my word I'd not harm a hair of one of your beasts?" he demanded.

"Then what do you want of the powder this side of the Settlement?"

she inquired, with tantalizing pertinence.

The young hunter, though steady and clear in his thought, was by no means apt in repartee, and Miranda had him at a cruel disadvantage. Confused by her last question, he blundered badly in his reply.

"But-what if a painter should jump on to me, like he was goin'

to yesterday?" he protested.

"I thought you promised you wouldn't harm a hair of one of them," suggested Miranda, thoughtful yet triumphant.

"Would you have me let the critter kill me, jest to keep my prom-

ise?" he asked, humor beginning to correct his vexation.

"I don't see why not," murmured Miranda. "Anyhow, you've got to do without the powder. And you needn't be frightened, Dave,"—this very patronizingly,—"for your father never carries a gun on our trail, and he never's needed one yet."

"Well then," laughed Dave, "I'll try an' keep my hair on, an' not be clean skeered to death. Good-by, Kirstie! good-by, Mirandy! I'll

look 'round this way afore long, like as not."

"Inside of twelve years?" queried Kirstie, with a rare smile which robbed her words of all reproach.

"Likely," responded Dave, and he swung off with long, active strides down the trail.

Miranda's eyes followed him with reluctance.

XIII.

MILKING TIME.

Young Dave Titus was not without the rudiments of a knowledge of woman, few as had been his opportunities for acquiring that rarest and most difficult of sciences. He made no second visit to the cabin in the Clearing till he had kept Miranda many weeks wondering at his absence. Then, when the stalks were whitey-gray and the pumpkins golden-yellow in the cornfield, and the buckwheat patch was crisply brown, and the scarlet of the maples was beginning to fade out along the forest edges, he came drifting back lazily one late afternoon, just as the slow tink-a-tonk of the cowbells was beginning the mellow proclamation of milking-time and sundown. The tonic chill of autumn in the wilderness open caught his nostrils deliciously as he emerged from the warmer stillness of the woods. The smell, the sound of the cowbells, these were homely sweet after the day-long solitude of the trail. But the scene, the gray cabin lifted skyward on the gradual swell of the fields, was loneliness itself. The Clearing seemed to Dave a little beautiful lost world, and it gave him an ache at the heart to think of the years that Miranda and Kirstie had dwelt in it alone.

Just beyond the edge of the forest he came upon Kroof, grubbing and munching some wild roots. He spoke to her deferentially, but she swung her huge rump about and firmly ignored him. He was anxious to win the shrewd beast's favor, or at least her tolerance, both because she had stirred his imagination and because he felt that her good-will would be in Miranda's eyes a most convincing testimonial to his worth. But he wisely refrained from forcing himself upon her notice.

"Go slow, my son, go slow. It's a she, an' more'n likely you don't know jest how to take her," he muttered to himself, after a fashion acquired in the interminable solitude of his camp. Leaving Kroof to her moroseness, he hastened up to the cabin in hopes that he would be in time to help Kirstie and Miranda with the milking.

Just before he got to the door he experienced a surprise, so far as he was capable of being surprised at anything which might take place in these unreal surroundings. From behind the cabin came Wapiti, the buck, or perhaps a younger Wapiti, on whom the spirit of his sire had descended in double portion. Close after him came two does, sniffing doubtfully at the smell of a stranger on the air. To Wapiti a stranger at the cabin, where such visitants were unheard of, must needs be an enemy or at least a suspect. He stepped delicately out into the path, stamped his fine hoof in defiance, and lowered his armory of antlers. They were keen and hard, these October antlers, for this was the moon of battle and he was ready. In rutting season Wapiti was every inch a hero.

Now, Dave Titus knew well that this was no bluff of Wapiti's. He was amused and embarrassed. He could not fight his unexpected foe, for victory and defeat would be equally fatal to his hope of pleasing Miranda. As a consequence, here was he, Dave Titus, the noted hunter, the Nimrod, held up by a rutting buck! Well, the trouble was of Miranda's making. She'd have to get him out of it. Facing the defiant Wapiti at a distance of five or six paces, he rested the butt of his rifle on his toe and sent a mellow, resonant "heigh-lo, heigh-lo," echoing over the still air. The forest edges took it up, answering again and again. Kirstie and Miranda came to the door to see who gave the summons, and they understood the situation at a glance.

"Call off yer dawg, Mirandy," cried young Dave, "an' I'll come an' pay ye a visit."

"He thinks you're going to hurt us," explained Kirstie; and Miranda, with a gay laugh, ran to the rescue.

"You mustn't frighten the good little boy, Wapiti," she cried, pushing the big deer out of her path and running to Dave's side. As soon as Wapiti saw Miranda with Dave, he comprehended that the stranger was not a foe. With a flourish of his horns he stepped aside and led his herd off through the barnyard.

Arriving at the door, where Kirstie, gracious but impassive, awaited him, Dave exclaimed:

"She's saved my life ag'in, Kirstie, that girl o' yourn. First, it's a painter, an' now it's a rutting buck. Wonder what it'll be next time!"

"A rabbit, like as not, or a squir'l, may be," suggested Miranda unkindly.

"Whatever it be," persisted Dave, "third time's luck,—for me, anyways. If you save my life ag'in, Mirandy, you'll hev to take care o' me altogether. I'll git to kind o' depend on ye."

"Then I reckon, Dave, you'll get out of your next scrape by your-self," answered Miranda with discouraging decision.

"That's one on you, Dave," remarked Kirstie with a strictly neutral air. But behind Miranda's back she shot him a look which said:

"Don't you mind what she says, she's all right in her heart," which, indeed, was far from being the case. Had Dave been so injudicious as to woo openly at this stage of Miranda's feelings, he would have been dismissed with speedy emphasis.

Dave was in time to help with the milking, a process which he boyishly enjoyed. The cows—five of them—were by now lowing at the bars. Kirstie brought out three tin pails.

"You can help us, if you like, Dave," she cried, while Miranda looked her doubt of such a clumsy creature's capacity for the gentle art of milking.

"Can you milk?" she queried.

"Course I can, though I haven't had much chance o' late years, to practise," said Dave.

"Can you milk without hurting the cow? Are you sure? And can you draw off the strippings clean?" she persisted, manifestly sceptical.

"Try me," said Dave.

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"Let him take old Whitey, Miranda. He'll get through with her,

may be, while we're milking the others," suggested Kirstie.

"Oh, well, any one could milk Whitey," assented Miranda; and Dave, on his mettle, vowed within himself that he'd have old Whitey milked, and milked dry, and milked to her satisfaction, before either Kirstie or Miranda was through with her first milker. He stroked the cow on the flank, and scratched her belly gently, and established friendly relations with her before starting, and the elastic firmness of his strong hands chanced to suit Whitey's large teats. The animal eyed him with favor, and gave down her milk affluently. As the full streams sounded more and more liquidly in his pail, Dave knew that he had the game in his hands, and took time to glance at his rivals. To his astonishment there was Kroof sitting up on her haunches close beside Miranda, her narrow red tongue lolling from her lazily open jaws, while she watched the milky fountains with interest.

While Kirstie's scarlet-kerchiefed head was still pressed upon her milker's flank, and while Miranda was just beginning to draw off the rich "strippings" into a tincup, Dave completed his task. His pail—he had milked the strippings in along with the rest—was foaming creamily to the brim. He arose and vaunted himself.

"Some day, when I've got lots of time," he drawled, "I'll larn you two how to milk!"

"You needn't think you're done already," retorted Miranda, without looking up. "I'll get a quart more out of old Whitey soon as I'm through here."

But Kirstie came over and looked at the pail.

"No, you won't, Miranda, not this time!" she exclaimed. "Dave's beat us, sure. Old Whitey never gave us a fuller pail in her life. Dave, you can milk. You go and milk Michael over there—the black-an'-white one—for me. I'll leave you and Miranda, if you won't fall out, to finish up here, while I go and get an extra good supper for you—so's you'll come again soon. I know you men keep your hearts in your stomachs,—just where we women know how to reach them easy. Where'd we have been if the Lord had not made us cooks!"

Such unwonted pleasantry on the part of her sombre mother proved to Miranda that Dave was much in her graces, and she felt moved to a greater austerity in order that she might keep the balance true. Throughout the rest of the milking she answered all Dave's attempts at conversation with briefest "yes" or "no," and presently reduced him to a discouraged silence. During supper—which consisted of fresh trout fried in corn-meal, and golden hot Johnny-cake with red molasses, and eggs fried with tomatoes, and sweet curds with clotted cream, all in a perfection to justify Kirstie's promise-Miranda relented a little and talked freely. But Dave had been too much subdued to readily regain his cheer. It was his tongue now that knew but "yes" and "no." Confronted by this result of her unkindness, Miranda's sympathetic heart softened. Turning in her seat to slip a piece of Johnny-cake, drenched in molasses, into the expectant mouth of Kroof, who sat up beside her, she spoke to Dave in a tone whose sweetness thrilled him to the finger-tips. The instinct of coquetry, native and not unknown to the furtive folk themselves, was beginning to stir within Miranda's untaught heart.

"I'm going down to the lake to-night, Dave," she said, "to set a night-line and see if I can catch a togue.* There's a full moon, and the lake'll be worth looking at. Won't you come along with us?"

"Won't I, Mirandy? Couldn't think of nothin' I'd like better!" was the eager response.

"We'll start soon as ever we get the dishes washed up," explained

the girl; "and you can help us at that. What say, mother?"

"Certainly Dave can help us," answered Kirstie, "if you have the nerve to set the likes of him at woman's work. But I reckon I won't go with you to-night to the lake. Kroof and Dave'll be enough to look after you."

"I'll look after Dave, more like!" exclaimed Miranda scornfully, remembering both Wapiti and the panther. "But what's the matter,

mother? Do come. It won't be the same without you."

"Seems to me I'm tired to-night, kind of, and I just want to stay home by the fire and think."

Miranda sprang up, with concern in her face, and ran around to her mother's seat.

"Tired, mother!" she cried, scanning her features anxiously. "Who ever heard of people like you and me, who are strong, and live right, being tired? I'm afraid you're not well, mother! I won't go one step!"

"Yes, you will, dearie," answered her mother, and never yet had Miranda rebelled against that firm note in Kirstie's voice. "I really want to be alone to-night a bit, and think. Dave's visit has stirred up a lot of old thoughts, and I want to take a look at them. I reckoned they were dead an' buried years ago."

"Are you sure you're not sick, mother?" went on Miranda, hesi-

tatingly returning to her seat.

"No, child, I'm not sick. But I have felt tired off and on the last few days when there was no call to. I do begin to feel that this big solitude of the woods is wearing on me, someways. I've stood up under it all these years, Dave, and it's given me peace and strength when I needed it bad enough, God knows. But someways, I reckon it's too big for me, and will crush me in the long run. I love the Clearing,—but I don't just want to end my days here."

"Mother!" cried Miranda, springing up again, "I never heard you talk so before in my life. Leave the Clearing! Leave the woods! I

couldn't live, I just couldn't, anywheres else at all!"

"There's other places, Mirandy," murmured Dave. But Kirstie

continued the argument.

"It's a sight different with you, child," she said thoughtfully. "You've grown up here. The woods and the sky have made you. They're in your blood. You live and breathe them. You were a queer baby, more a fairy or a wild thing than a human youngster, before you ever came to the Clearing; an' all the wild things seem to think you're one of themselves; an' you see what other folks can't see, —what the folk of the woods themselves can't see. Oh! yes, it's a sight different with you, Miranda. Your dear father used to watch you an' say you'd grow up to be a kind of a faun-woman or wood-goddess,

or else the fairies would carry you off. This place is all right for you. And I used to think I was that big and strong of spirit that I could stand up to it all the rest of my life. But I begin to think it's too big for me. I don't want to die here, Miranda!"

Miranda stared at her, greatly troubled.

"You won't die till I'm old enough to die too, mother," she cried, "for I just couldn't live without you one day. But," she added passionately, "I know I should die, quick, right off, if I had to go away from the Clearing. I know I should!"

She spoke with the fiercer positiveness, because just as she was speaking there came over her a doubt of her own words. In a flash she saw herself growing old here in the vast solitude, she and Kirstie together, and no one else anywhere to be seen. The figure so cruelly conspicuous in its absence bore a strange, dim likeness to young Dave. She did not ask herself if it were possible that she could one day wish to desert the Clearing, and the stillness, and all the folk of the ancient wood; but somewhere at the back of her heart she felt that it might even be so, and her heart contracted poignantly. She ran and flung both arms about Kroof's neck, and wiped a stealthy tear on the shaggy coat.

Dave, with a quickening intuition, born of his dread lest the trip to the lake should fall through, saw that the conversation was treading dangerous ground. He discreetly changed the subject to Johnny-cake.

XIV.

MOONLIGHT AND MOOSECALL.

WHEN Miranda was ready to start the moon was up, low and large, shining broadly into the cabin window. Miranda brought forward a small, tin covered kettle containing some little fish for bait.

"Where's your line an' hooks?" asked Dave.

"I keep them in a hollow tree by the lake," said Miranda. "But don't you go to take that thing along, or you don't go with me!" she added sharply, as the young man picked up his rifle.

He set it down again with alacrity.

"But at night, Mirandy," he protested. "Air ye sure it's safe?"

"Don't come if you're afraid," she answered witheringly, stepping out into the white light and the coldly pungent air.

Dave was at her side in a moment, ignoring a taunt which could touch him least among men. At Miranda's other side was the great, lumbering form of Kroof, with the girl's hand resting lovingly on her neck.

"We'll not be long, mother," called Miranda to Kirstie in the doorway.

But before they had gone twenty paces Kroof stopped short and

sat down to deliberate. She regarded it as her own peculiar office to protect Miranda (who needed no protection) on these nocturnal expeditions to which the girl was given in some moods. Was the obnoxious stranger to usurp her office and her privilege? Well, she would not share with him; she would stay where she was needed.

"Come along, Kroof!" urged Miranda, with a little tug at her fur. But the jealous bear was obstinate. She wheeled and made for

the cabin door.

Miranda was irritated.

"Let her stay, then!" she exclaimed, setting her face to the forest and smiling in more gracious fashion upon young Dave. Kroof was certainly very provoking.

"That's all right," said Dave, more pleased than he dare show.

"She'll be company for yer mother till we git back."

"Kroof seems to think she owns me," mused Miranda. "I love her better than anyone else in the world except mother; but I mustn't spoil her when she gets cross about nothing. She oughtn't to be so jealous when I'm nice to you, Dave. I'm very angry at her for being so silly. She ought to know you're nothing to me alongside of her; now, oughtn't she?"

"Of course," assented Dave, with such cheerfulness as he could assume. Then he set himself craftily to win Miranda's approval by a minute account of the characteristics, mental, moral, and physical, of a tame bear named Pete belonging to one of the lumbermen at the Settlement. The subject was sagaciously chosen, and had the effect of making Miranda feel measurably less remote from the world of men. It suggested to her a kind of possible understanding between the world of men and the world of the ancient wood.

As they left the moonlit open, the long white fingers of the phantom light reached after them, down the dissolving arches. Then the last groping ray was left behind, and they walked in the soft dark. Dave found it an exquisite but imperative necessity to keep close at Miranda's elbow, touching her very skirt, indeed, for even his trained woodland eyes could at first distinguish nothing. Miranda, however, with her miraculous vision, moved swiftly, unhesitatingly, as if in broad

day and a plain way.

Soon, however, Dave's eyes adapted themselves, and he could discern vague differences, denser masses, semi-translucencies, in the enfolding depth of blackness. For there was a light, of a kind, carried down by countless reflections and refractions from the lit wet surfaces of the topmost leaves. Moreover, clean-blooded and fine-nerved as he was from his years of living under nature's ceaseless purgation, his other senses came to the aid of his baffled sight. He seemed to feel, rather than see, the massive bulk of the pine and birch trunks as his face

approached them to the nearness of an arm's length. He felt, too, an added hardness and a swelling under the moss wherever the network of roots came close to the parent trunk. His nostrils discerned the pine, the spruce, the hemlock, the balsam poplar, the aromatic moosewood, as he passed them, and long before he came to it he knew the tamarack swamp was near. Only his ears could not aid him. Except for Miranda's footsteps, feather-soft upon the moss, and his own heavier but skilfully muffled tread, there was no sound in the forest but an indeterminate whisper, so thin that it might have been the speech of the leaves conferring, or the sap climbing through the smaller branches. Neither he nor Miranda uttered a word: the stillness was such that a voice would have profaned it. Finding it difficult to keep up without stumbling and making a rough noise, Dave frankly resigned himself to the girl's superior craft.

"You've got to be eyes for me, here, you wonderful Mirandy, er I can't keep up with ye," he whispered at her ear. The light warmth of his breath upon her neck made her tingle in a way that bewildered her, but she found it pleasant. When he took hold of her arm, very gently, to steady himself, rather to his surprise he was permitted. He was wise enough, however, to attach not too much importance to the favor. He pondered the fact that to Miranda, who was not a Settlement girl, it meant altogether nothing.

Presently, just ahead of them, they saw a pair of palely-glowing eyes about two feet from the ground. Miranda squeezed the hand inside her arm, as a sign that Dave was not to regret his rifle. As a matter of fact, he was not disposed to regret anything at the moment.

"Lou'-cerfie," he whispered at her ear, meaning the lynx, or loup-cervier of the camps.

"No, panther," murmured Miranda indifferently, going straight forward. At this startling word Dave could not, under the circumstances, refrain from a certain misgiving. A panther is not good to meet in the dark. But the palely-glowing eyes sank mysteriously towards the ground and retreated as Miranda advanced, and in a few seconds they went floating off to one side and disappeared.

"How on earth do ye do it, Mirandy?" whispered Dave, rather awestruck.

"They know me," replied the girl; which seemed to her, but not to Dave, an all-sufficient answer.

There was no more said. The magic of the dark held them both breathless. They were keyed up to a strange, electric pitch of sympathy and expectation. Dave's fingers, where they rested on the girl's arm, tingled curiously, deliciously. Once, close beside them, there was a sharp rattle of claws going up the bark of a fir-tree, and then two little

points of light, close together, gleamed down upon them from overhead. Both Miranda and Dave knew it was a raccoon, and said nothing. Farther on they came suddenly upon a spectrally luminous figure just in their path. It was nearly the height of a man. The ghostly light waxed and waned before their eyes. A timorous imagination might have been pardoned for calling it a spirit sent to warn them back from their venture. But they knew it was only a rotten birch-stump turned phosphorescent. As they passed, Dave broke off a piece and crumbled it, and for some minutes the bluish light clung to his fingers, like a perfume.

At last they heard an owl hoot solemnly in the distance. "Tw'oh hoo-hoo-hoo-ooo," it went, a cold and melancholy sound.

"We're near the lake," whispered Miranda. "I know Wah-hoo, and he lives in an old tree close to the water. We're almost there." Then glimpses of light came, broken and thin, from the far-off moon-silvered surface. Then a breath of chill, though there was no wind. And then they came out upon the open shore.

Miranda, with a decisive gesture, removed her arm from Dave's grasp, and side by side the two followed the long sweep of sandy beach

curving off to the right.

"See that point yonder," said Miranda, "with the lop-sided tree standing alone on it? I've got my line an' hooks hidden in that tree."

"How do ye set a night-line without a boat?" queried Dave.

"Got one, of course!" answered the girl. "Your father made me a dug-out, last summer a year ago, an' I keep it drawn up behind the point."

The moon was high now, sailing in icy splendor of solitude over the immensity of the ancient wood. The lake was a windless mirror. The beach was very smooth and white, etched along its landward edges with the shadows of the trees. At one spot a cluster of three willows grew very near the water's brink, spreading a transparent and mysterious shadow. Just as Dave and Miranda came to this little oasis in the shining sand, across the water came the long, sonorous call of a bull moose. It was a deep note, melodious and far-carrying, and seemed in some way the very spoken thought of the vastness.

"That's what I call music!" said Dave.

But before Miranda could respond, a thunderous bellow roared in answer from the blackness of the woods close by, there was a heavy crashing in the underbrush, and the towering front of another bull appeared at the edge of the sands, looking for his challenger. Catching sight of Dave and Miranda, he charged down upon them at once.

"Get up a tree, quick!" cried Dave, slipping his long knife from

its sheath and stepping in front of the girl.

"Don't you meddle, and there'll be no trouble!" said Miranda sharply. "You stand behind that tree!" and seizing him by the arm she attempted to push him out of sight. But for a second he stupidly resisted,

"Fool!" she flamed out at him. "What do you suppose I've done

all these years without you?"

The anger in her eyes pierced his senses and brought wisdom. He realized that somehow she was master of the situation, and he reluctantly stepped behind the big willow trunk. It was just in the nick of time, for the furious animal was almost upon them. At this moment a breath of air from the water carried Miranda's scent to the beast's nostrils, and he checked himself in doubt. At once Miranda gave a soft whistle and stepped out into the clear flood of the moonlight. The moose recognized her, stood still, raised his gigantic antlers to their full height, and stretched towards her his long, flexible snout, sniffing amicably. Then step by step he approached, while she waited with her small hand held out to him, palm upwards, and Dave looked on in wonder from behind his tree, still doubtful, and his fingers gripping on his knife hilt.

At this moment the first call sounded again across the lake. The moose forgot Miranda. He wheeled nimbly, lowered his head towards the great challenge, bellowed his answer, and then charged along the shore to mortal combat. As he disappeared around a jutting spur of pines, a tall cow-moose emerged from the shades and trotted after him.

Miranda turned to Dave with an air of triumph, her anger forgotten.

"I swan, Mirandy!" exclaimed the young hunter, "the girl as can manage a bull-moose in callin' season is the Queen of the Forest, sure. I take off my cap to yer majesty."

"Put it on again, Dave," said she, not half displeased, "and we'll

go set the night-lines."

Behind the point, hidden in a thicket of mixed huckleberry and iron-wood, they found the wooden canoe, or "dug-out," in good condition. Dave ran it down into the water, and Miranda tossed in a roll of stout cod-line with four large hooks depending from it, at four-foot intervals, by drop strings a foot-and-a-half in length. The hooks she proceeded to bait from the tin kettle.

"Why don't ye have more hooks on sech a len'th of line?" inquired

Dave.

"Don't want to catch more togue than we can eat," explained Miranda. "It's no fun catching 'em this way, and they ain't much good salted."

There was but one paddle, and this Dave captured.

"You sit in the bow, Mirandy, an' see to the lines, an' I'll paddle ye out," said he.

But Miranda would have none of it.

"Look here, Dave," she exclaimed, "I'm doing this, and you're just a visitor. I declare, I'm 'most sorry I brought you along. You just sit where you're put, and do as I tell you, or you won't come with me again."

The young man squatted himself meekly on his knees, a little forward of amidship, but not far enough for his superior weight to put the canoe down by the bow. Then Miranda stepped in delicately, seated herself on a thwart at the stern, and dipped her paddle with precise and masterful stroke. The canoe shot noiselessly out of the shadow and into the unrippled sheen. Just off the point, about twenty yards from shore, lay a light wooden float at anchor. Beside this Miranda brought her canoe to a standstill, backing water silently with firm flexures of her wrist. To a rusty staple in the float she fastened one end of the line.

"Deep water off this here point, I reckon," commented Dave.

"Of course," answered Miranda. "The togue only lie in deep water."

Dave was permitted to make comments, but to take no more active part in the proceedings. As he was a man of deeds and dreams rather than of speech, this was not the rôle he coveted, and he held his tongue; while Miranda, deftly paying out the line with one hand, with the other cleverly wielded the paddle so that the canoe slipped towards shore. She was too much absorbed in the operation to vouchsafe any explanation to Dave, but he saw that she intended making fast the other end of the line to a stake which jutted up close to the water's edge.

Miranda now slipped the line under her foot to hold it, and taking both hands to her paddle was about to make a landing, when suddenly there was a violent tug at one of the hooks. The line was torn from under her light foot and at once dragged overboard. Dave saw what had happened; but he was wise enough not to say, even by look or tone, "I told you so!" Instead, he turned and pointed to the float, which was now acting very erratically, darting from side to side, and at times plunging quite under water. The glassy mirror of the lake was shattered to bits.

"You've got him a'ready, Mirandy," he cried in triumph; and his palpable elation quite covered Miranda's chagrin. Two or three strong strokes of her paddle brought the canoe back to the float, and Dave had his reward.

"Catch hold of the float, Dave," she commanded, "and pull him aboard, while I hold the canoe."

With a great splashing and turmoil he hauled up a large togue, of twelve pounds or thereabouts, and landed it flopping in the bottom of the dug-out. A stroke in the back of the neck from Miranda's knife, sharp but humane, put a term to its struggles.

While Dave gazed admiringly at the glittering spoil, Miranda began

untying the line from the float.

"What air ye doin' now, Miranda?" he inquired, as she proceeded to strip the bait from the remaining hooks and throw the pieces overboard.

"We won't want any more togue for a week," she exclaimed, "this is such a fine big one," and she headed the canoe for the landing-place under the shadow of the point.

XV.

A VENISON STEAK.

Throughout the succeeding winter Dave managed to visit the Clearing two or three times in the course of each month, but he could not see that he made any progress in Miranda's favor. As at first, she was sometimes friendly, sometimes caustically indifferent. Only once did he perceive in her the smallest hint of gratification at his coming. That was the time when he came on his snowshoes through the forest by moonlight, the snow giving a diffused glimmer that showed him the trail even through the densest thickets. Arriving in the morning, he surprised her at the door of the cow-stable, where she had been foddering the cattle. Her face flushed at the sight of him, and a look came into her wide, dark eyes which even his modesty could not quite misunderstand. But his delight quickly crumbled. Miranda was loftily indifferent to him during all that visit, so much so that after he had gone Kirstie reproached her with incivility.

"I can't help it, mother," she exclaimed; "I don't want to hate him, but what better is he than a butcher? His bread is stained with blood. Pah! I sometimes think I smell blood, the blood of the kind wood creatures, when he's around."

"But you don't want him not to come, girl, surely!" protested her mother.

"Well, you know, it's a pleasure to you to have him come once in a while," said the girl enigmatically.

Dave continued his visits, biding his time. He lost no chance of familiarizing Miranda's imagination with the needs of man as he imagined them, and with a rational conception of life as he conceived it. This he did not do directly, but through the medium of conversation with Kirstie, to whom his words were sweetness. He was determined to break down Miranda's prejudice against his calling, which to him was the only one worth a man's while,—wholesome, sane, full of adven-

ture, full of romance. He was determined, also, to overcome her deep aversion to flesh food. He felt that not till these two points were gained would Miranda become sufficiently human to understand human love or any truly human emotions. In this belief he strictly withheld his wooing, and waited till the barriers that opposed it should be undermined by his systematic attacks. He was too little learned in woman to realize that with Miranda his best wooing was the absence of all wooing; and so he builded better than he knew.

During the cold months he was glad to be relieved of the presence of Kroof, who had proved, in her taciturn way, quite irreconcilable. He had tried in vain to purchase her favor with honey, good hive-bees' honey in the comb, carried all the way from the Settlement. She would have nothing to do with him at any price, and he felt that this discredited him in Miranda's eyes. He hoped that Kroof would

sleep late that spring in her lair under the pine-root.

But while Dave was laboring so assiduously, and, as he fancied, so subtly, to mould and fashion Miranda, she, all unawares, was moulding him. Unconsciously his rifle and his traps were losing zest for him, and the utter solitude of his camp beyond the Quah-Davic began to have manifest disadvantages. Once he hesitated so long over a good shot at a lynx just because the creature looked unsuspecting, that in the end he was too late and his store of pelts was the poorer by one good skin. Shooting a young cow-moose in the deep snow, moreover, he felt an unwonted qualm when the gasping and bleeding beast turned upon him a look of anguished reproach. His hand was not quite so steady as usual when he gave her the knife in the throat. This was a weakness which he did not let himself examine too closely. knew the flesh of the young cow was tender and good, and after freezing it he hung it up in his cold cellar. Though he would not for an instant have acknowledged it, even to himself, he was glad that bears were not his business during the winter, for he would almost certainly have felt a sense of guilt, of wrong to Miranda, in shooting them. For all this undercurrent of qualm in the hidden depths of his heart, however, his hunting was never more prosperous than during the January and February of that winter, and fox, lynx, wolverine, seemed not only to run upon his gun, but to seek his traps as a haven. He killed with an emphasis, as if to rebuke the waking germ of softness in his soul. But he had little of the old satisfaction as he saw his peltries accumulate. His craft was now become a business, a mere routine necessity. For pleasure he chose to watch Miranda as her feathered pensioners snow-birds, wrens, rose grosbeaks, and a glossy crow or two-gathered about her of a morning for their meal of grain and crumbs. They alighted on her hair, her shoulders, her arms; and the round-headed, childlike grosbeaks would peck bread from her red lips; and a crow.

every now and then, would sidle in briskly and give a mischievous tug at the string of her moccasin. To the girl his heart needed no warming,—it burned by now with a fire which all his backwoods stoicism could but ill disguise,—but to the birds, and through them to all the furry folk of the wood, his heart warmed as he regarded the beautiful sight. He noted that the birds were quite unafraid of Kirstie, who also fed them; but he saw that towards Miranda they showed an active. even aggressive ardor, striving jealously for the touch of her hand or foot or skirt when no titbits whatever were in question. And another sight there was, towards shut of winter's evening, that moved him strangely. The wild, white hares (he and Kirstie and Miranda called them rabbits) would come leaping over the snow to the cabin door to be fed, with never cat or weasel on their trail. They would press around the girl, nibbling eagerly at her dole of clover-hay and carrots, some crouching about her feet, some erect and striking at her petticoat with their nervous fore-paws, all twinkling-eared, and all implicitly trustful of this kind Miranda of the clover.

Towards spring Miranda began to be troubled about Kirstie's health. She saw that the firm lines of her mother's face were growing unwontedly sharp, the bones of her cheek and jaw strangely conspicuous. Then her solicitous scrutiny took note of a pallor under the skin, a grayish whiteness at the corners of her eyes, a lack of vividness in the usually brilliant scarlet of the lips; for up to now Kirstie had retained all the vital coloring and tone of youth. Then, too, there was a listlessness, a desire to rest and take breath after very ordinary tasks of chopping or of throwing fodder for the cattle. This puzzled the girl much more than Kirstie's increasing tendency to sit dreaming over the hearth fire when there was work to be done. Miranda felt equal to doing all the winter work, and she knew that her mother, like herself, was ever a dreamer when the mood was on. But even this brooding abstraction came to worry her at last, when, one morning after a drifting storm which had piled the snow half-way up to the windows, her mother let her shovel out all the paths unaided, with never a comment or excuse. Miranda was not aggrieved at this by any means, but she began to be afraid,—sorely afraid. It was so unlike the alert and busy Kirstie of old days. Of necessity Miranda turned to young Dave for counsel in her alarm when next he came to the Clearing.

The conference took place in the warm twilight of the cow-stable, where Dave, according to his custom, was helping Miranda at the milking while Kirstie got supper. The young hunter looked serious, but not surprised.

"I've took note o' the change this two month back, Mirandy," he said, "an' was a-wonderin' some how them big eyes of yourn, that can

see things us ordinary folks can't see, could be so blind to what teched ye so close."

"I wasn't blind to it, Dave," protested the girl indignantly, "but I didn't see how you could help any, nor I don't see now; but there was no one else I could speak to about it," she added, with a break in her voice that distantly presaged tears.

"I could help some,—if you'd let me, Mirandy," he hesitated, "for

I know right well what she's needin'."

"Well, what is it?" demanded the girl. There was that in his voice which oppressed her with a vague misgiving.

"It's good, fresh, roast meat she wants," said Dave.

There was a pause. Miranda turned and looked out through the stable door, across the glimmering fields.

"It's her blood's got thin an' poor," continued Dave. "Nothin' but flesh meat'll build her up now, an' she's jest got to have it."

He was beginning to feel it was time that Miranda experienced the touch of a firm hand.

"I don't believe you!" said the girl, and turned hotly to her milking.

"Well, we'll see," retorted Dave. In Miranda's silence he read a

tardy triumph for his views.

That evening he took note of the fact that Kirstie came to supper with no appetite, though every dish of it was tempting and well cooked, Miranda observed this also. Her fresh pang of apprehension on her mother's account was mixed with a resentful feeling that Dave would interpret every symptom as a confirmation of his own view. She was quite honest in her rejection of that view, for in her eyes flesh food was a kind of subtle poison. But she was too anxious about her mother's health to commit herself in open hostility to anything, however extreme, which might be suggested in remedy. On this point she was resolved to hold aloof, letting the decision rest between her mother and Dave.

Aroused by the young hunter's talk, Kirstie was brighter than usual during the meal. But to her great disappointment, Dave got up to go immediately after supper. He would take no persuasion, but insisted that he had come just to see if she and Miranda were well, and declared that affairs of supreme importance called him straight back to the camp. Kirstie was not convinced. She turned a face of reproach on Miranda, so frankly that the girl was compelled to take her meaning.

"Oh, it isn't my fault, mother," she protested, with a little vexed laugh. "I've not been doing anything ugly to him. If he goes, it's just his own obstinacy, for he knows we'd like him to stay as he always

does. Let him go if he wants to."

"Mirandy," said her mother in a voice of grave rebuke, "I wish

you would not be so hard with Dave. If you treated your dumb beasts like you treat him, I reckon they would never come to you a second time. You seem to forget that Dave and his father are our only friends,—and just now, Dave's father being in the lumber camp, we've nobody but Dave here to look to."

"Oh, I've nothing against Dave, mother,—except the blood on his hands!" retorted the girl, turning her face away.

The young hunter shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly, smiled a slow smile of understanding at Kirstie, and strode to the door.

"Good-night, both of yez," he said cheerfully. "Ye'll see me back, liker'n not, by this time to-morrow."

As he went Miranda noticed, with astonishment and a flush of warmth, that for once in his career he was without his inseparable rifle. Kirstie, in the vacant silence that followed his going, had it on her tongue to say,—

"I do wish you could take to Dave, Miranda."

But the woman's heart within her gave warning in time, and she held her peace. Thanks to this prudence, Miranda went to bed that night with something of a glow at her heart. Dave's coming without the rifle was a direct tribute to her influence, and to some extent outweighed his horrible suggestion that her mother should defile her mouth with meat.

The next evening the chores were all done up, the "rabbits" had come, and gone with their clover and carrots, and Kirstie and Miranda were sitting down to their supper, when in walked Dave. He carried a package of something done up in brown sacking. This time, too, he carried his rifle. Kirstie's welcome was frankly eager, but Miranda saw the rifle, and froze. He caught her look, and with a flash of intuition understood it.

"Had to bring it along, Mirandy," he explained with a flush of embarrassment. "Couldn't ha' got here without it. The wolves have come back again, six of 'em. They set on to me at my own camp door."

"Oh, wolves!" exclaimed Miranda in a tone of aversion. "They're vermin."

Since that far-off day when, with her childish face flattened against the pane, her childish heart swelling with wrath and tears, she had watched the wolves attack Ten-Tine's little herd, she had hated the ravening beasts with a whole-souled hate.

"I hope to goodness you killed them all!" said Kirstie with pious fervor.

"Two got off. Got the pelts of the others," answered Dave.

"Not too bad, that," commented Kirstie with approval; "now come and have some supper."

"Not just yet, Kirstie," he replied, undoing his package. "I've noticed lately ye was lookin' mighty peakéd, an' hadn't much appetite, like. Now when folks has anything the matter with 'em I know as much about it as lots of the doctors, and I know what's goin' to set ye right up. If ye'll lend me the loan of yer fire an' a frying-pan, I'll have something for yer supper that'll do ye more good than a bucketful of doctors' medicine."

Miranda knew what was coming. She knew that Dave had been all the way back to his camp, beyond the Quah-Davic, for meat, that he might run no risk of killing any of the beasts that were under her protection. She knew, too, that to make such a journey in the twenty-four hours he could scarce have had one hour's sleeep. None the less, she hardened her heart against him. She kept her eyes on her plate, and listened with strained intensity for her mother's word upon this vital subject.

Kirstie's interest was now very much awake.

"There's the fire, Dave," she said, "and there's the frying-pan hanging on the side of the dresser. But what have you got? I've felt this long while I'd like a bit of a change,—not but what the food we're used to, Miranda and me, is real good food, and wholesome."

"Well, Kirstie," he answered, taking a deep breath before the plunge, and at the same time throwing back the wrapping from a rosy cut of venison steak, "it's jest nothin' more nor less than fresh meat. It's venison, clean an' wholesome, and I'll fry ye right now this tender slice I'm cuttin' for ye."

Kirstie was startled quite out of her self-possession. The rule of the cabin against flesh-meat was so long established, so well known at the Settlement, so fenced about with every sanction of principle and prejudice, that Dave's words were of the nature of a challenge. She felt that she ought to be angry. But as a matter of fact, she was only uneasy as to how Miranda would take so daring a proposal. At the same time she was suddenly conscious of an unholy craving for the forbidden thing. She glanced anxiously at Miranda, but the girl appeared to be wrapped up in her own thoughts.

"But you know, Dave," she protested rebukingly, "we neither of us ever touch meat of any kind. You know our opinions on this

point."

The words themselves would have satisfied Miranda, had she not detected a certain irresolution in the tone. They did not affect Dave in the least. For a moment he made no reply, for he was busy cutting thin slices off the steak. He spread them carefully in the hot butter now spluttering in the pan over the coals; and then, straightening himself up from the task, knife in hand, he answered cheerfully, "That's all right. But ye see, Kirstie, all the folks reckon me some-

thin' of a doctor, an' this here meat I'm cookin' for ye ain't rightly food at all. It's medicine; 'tain't right ye should hold off now, when ye need it as medicine—'tain't fair to Mirandy. I can see ye've jest been pinin' away like all winter. It's new blood, with iron in it, ye need. It's flesh meat, an' flesh meat only, that'll give ye iron an' new blood. When ye're well, an' yer old strong self agin, ye can quit meat if ye like,—an' kick me out o' the cabin for interferin' if ye like, but now——"

He paused dramatically. He had talked right on, contrary to his silent habit, for a purpose. He knew the power of natural cravings. He was waiting for Kirstie's elemental bodily needs to speak out in support of his argument. He waited just time enough for the savory smell of the steak to fill the cabin and work its miracle. Now the spell was abroad. He looked to Kirstie for an answer.

The instant she smelled that savor Kirstie knew that he was right. Steak, venison steak fried in butter, was what she required. For weeks she had had no appetite, now she was ravenous. Moreover, a thousand lesser forces, set in motion by Dave's long talks, were impelling her to just such a change as the eating of flesh would symbolize to her. But-Miranda? Kirstie stared at her in nervous apprehension, expecting an outburst of scorn. But Miranda was seemingly oblivious of all that went on in the cabin. Her unfathomed eyes, abstractedly wide open, were staring out through the white square of the window. She was trying hard to think about the mysterious blue-white waste of radiance that seemed to pour in palpable floods from the full moon, -about the furred and furtive creatures passing and repassing noiselessly, as she knew, across the lit patches of the glades,—about the herd of moose down in the fir-woods, sleeping securely between walls of deep snow in the "yard" which they had trodden for themselves a fortnight back,-of Kroof, coiled in her warm den under the pine root, with five feet of drift piled over her. But in reality she was steeling herself with a fierce desperation against a strange appetite which was rising within her at the call of that insidious fragrance. With a kind of horror she realized that she was at war with herself, that one-half her nature was really more than ready to partake of the forbidden food.

Dave noticed the look of question which Kirstie had turned upon Miranda.

"Oh, ye needn't look to her, Kirstie, to back ye up in no foolishness," he went on. "I spoke to her last night about it, an' she hadn't a word to say agin my medicine."

Still there was no comment from Miranda. If Miranda, to whom abstinence from flesh was a religion, could tolerate a compromise, why, she herself, to whom it was merely a prejudice and a preference, might

well break an ancient rule for an instant's good. She had been inwardly anxious for months about her condition. After a second or two of doubt her mind was made up, and when Kirstie made up her mind it was in no half-way fashion.

"I'll try your doctoring, Dave," she said slowly. "I'll give it a fair trial. But while you're about it, why don't you cook enough for yourself too? Have you put salt in the pan? And here's a dash of

pepper."

"No," answered the young hunter, concealing his elation as he sprinkled the steak temperately with the proffered salt and pepper, "I don't want none myself. I need meat oncet in a while, er I git weak an' no good. But there's nothin' suits my taste like the feeds I git here,—the pipin' hot riz buckwheat cakes with lots o' butter an' molasses, an' the Johnny-cake, an' the potater pie, an' the tasty ways ye cook eggs. I often think when I'm here that I wouldn't care if I never seen a slice o' fresh meat, er even bacon, agin. But our bodies is built a certain way, an' there's no gittin' over nature's intention. We've got the teeth to prove it,—an' the insides too,—I've read all about it in doctors' books. I read a heap in camp. Fact is, Kirstie, we're built like the bear, to live on all kinds of food, includin' flesh; an' if we don't git all kinds, oncet in a while, somethin's bound to go wrong."

Never had Dave talked so much before; but now he was feverishly eager to leave no opening for discussion. While he talked the venison was cooked and served. Kirstie ate it with a relish which convinced him of the wisdom of his course. She ate all that he had fried,—and he wisely refrained from cooking more, that her appetite might be kept on edge for it in the morning. Then she ate other things with an unwonted zest. Miranda returned to the table, talking pleasantly of everything but health and food and hunting. Against herself she was angry, but on Dave, to his surprise, she smiled with a rare graciousness. She was mollified by his tact in characterizing the steak as medicine; and, moreover, by his statement of a preference for their ordinary bloodless table he seemed in some way to range himself on her side, even while challenging her principles. But-oh, that savory smell! It still enriched the air of the cabin. It still stirred riotous cravings in her astonished appetite. She trembled with a fear and hatred of herself.

When Kirstie, with a face to which the old glow was already venturing back, laid down her knife and fork and exclaimed to her guest, "You're a good doctor and no mistake, Dave Titus. I declare I feel better already," Miranda got up and went silently out into the moonlight to breathe new air and take counsel with herself.

Dave would have followed her, but Kirstie stopped him.

"Best let her be," she said meaningly in a low voice. "She's got a heap to think over in the last half hour."

"But she's took it a sight better'n I thought she would," responded Dave.

And all on account of a venison steak, his hopes soared higher than they had ever dared before.

XVI

DEATH FOR A LITTLE LIFE.

THENCEFORWARD Kirstie twice or thrice a week medicined herself with fresh venison, provided assiduously by young Dave, and by the time spring was fairly in possession of the Clearing she was her old, strong self again. But as for Dave's hopes, they had been reduced to Miranda had taken alarm at her sudden carnivorous craving, and in her effort to undo that moment's weakness she had withdrawn herself to the utmost from Dave's influence. She had been the further incited to this by an imagined aloofness on the part of her furred and feathered pensioners. A pair of foxes, doubtless vagrants from beyond her sphere, had spread slaughter among the hares as they returned from feeding at the cabin. The hungry raiders had laid an ambush at the edge of the Clearing on two successive nights. They had killed recklessly. Then they vanished, doubtless driven away by the steady residents who knew how to kill discreetly and to guard their preserves from poachers. But the hares had taken alarm, and few came now o' nights for Miranda's carrots and clover. Miranda, with a little ache at her heart, concluded from this that she had forfeited her ascendency among the kin of the ancient wood. There had been a migration, too, among the squirrels, so that now these red busybodies were perceptibly fewer about the cabin roof. And the birds,-they were nearly all gone. An unusually early spring, laying bare the fields in the lower country, and bringing out the insects before their wont, had scattered Miranda's flocks a fortnight earlier than usual. No crumbs could take the place of swelling seeds and the first fat May-fly. But Miranda thought they were fled through distrust of her. Kroof, old Kroof the constant, was all unchanged when she came from her winter's sleep; but this spring she brought an unusually fine cub with her, and the cub, of necessity, took a good deal of her time and attention away from Miranda. When Miranda was with her, roaming the still, transparent corridors, all the untroubled past came back, crystalline and flawless as of old. Once more the furtive folk went about their business in the secure peace of the neighborhood; once more she revelled with a kind of intoxication in the miraculous fineness of her vision; once more she felt assured of the mastery of her look. But this was in the intervals between Dave's visits. When he was at the Clearing VOL. LXV.-36

everything was different. She was no longer sure of herself on any point. And the worst of it was that the more indifference to him she feigned, the less she felt. She was quite unconscious, all the while, that her mother was shrewdly watching her struggles. She was not unconscious, however, of Dave's attitude. She saw that he seemed dull and worried,—which gratified her, she knew not why, and confirmed her in her coolness. But at last, with a slow anger beginning to burn at his heart, he adopted the policy of ignoring her altogether and giving all his thought to Kirstie, whereupon Miranda awoke to the conclusion that it was her plain duty to be civil to her mother's guest.

This change, not obtrusive, but of great moment to Dave, came over the girl in June, when the dandelions were starring the pasture grass. The sowing and the potato-planting were just done. The lilac-bushes beside the cabin were a mass of purple enchantment. It was not a time for hard indifference; and Dave was quick to catch the melting mood. His manner was such, however, that Miranda could not take

alarm.

"Mirandy," said he, with the merest good comradeship in tone and air, "would ye take a little trip with me to-morrow, now that the crops can spare ye a bit?"

"Where to, Dave?" interposed Kirstie, fearful lest the girl should refuse out of hand, before she knew what Dave proposed to do.

"Why, I've got to go over the divide an' run down the Big Fork in my canoe to Gabe White's clearin', with some medicine I've brought from the Settlement for his little boy, what's sick. He's a leetle mite of a chap, five year old, with long yaller curls, purty as a picture, but that peakéd an' thin it goes to yer heart to see him. Gabe came in to the Settlement yesterday to see the doctor about him an' git medicine, but he's had to go right on to the city to sell his pelts an' git some stuff the doctor says the little feller must hev, what can't be got in the Settlement at all. So Gabe give me this" (and he pulled a bottle out of the inside pocket of his hunting-shirt) "to take to him right now, coz the little feller needs it badly. It's a right purty trip, Mirandy, an' the Big Fork's got some rapids 'at'll please ye. What ye say?"

Dave was growing subtle under Miranda's discipline. He knew that the picture of the small boy would draw her; and also that the sight of the ailing child, acting upon her quick sympathies, would awaken a new human interest and work secretly in favor of himself. The beauty of the scenery, the excitement of the rapids, these were a secondary influence, yet he knew they would not be without appeal to the beauty-worshipping and fearless Miranda.

The girl's deep eyes lightened at the prospect. She would see something a little different, yet not alien or hostile,—a new river, other hills

and woods, a deeper valley, a ruder cabin in a remoter clearing, a lonely woman,—above all, a little sick boy with long yellow hair.

"But it must be a long ways off, Dave!" she protested, in a tone that invited contradiction.

"Not so far as to the Settlement," answered Dave, "an' it don't take half so long to go, because o' the quick run down river. I reckon, though, we'd best stay over night at White's clearin' and come back easy next day,—if you don't mind, Kirstie. Sary Ann White's a powerful fine woman, an' Mirandy's sure to like her. It'll do her a sight of good, poor thing, to hev Mirandy to talk to a bit."

He wanted to say that just a look at Miranda's wild loveliness would do Mrs. White a lot of good, but he had not quite the courage for such a bold compliment.

"No, I don't mind, if Miranda likes to go," said Kirstie. "I sha'n't be lonesome, as Kroof'll be round most of the time."

It had come to be understood, and accepted without comment, that when Dave went anywhere with Miranda the jealous old bear remained at home.

Until they were fairly off, Dave was in a fever of anxiety lest Miranda should change her mind. But this venture had genuinely caught her interest, and no whim tempted her to withdraw. After a breakfast eaten so early that the early June dawn was still throwing its streaks of cool red through the cabin window and discouraging the fire upon the hearth, Dave and Miranda set out. They followed the path to the spring among the alders, and then plunged direct into the woods, aiming a little to the east of north. The dew was thick in silver globules on the chips of the yard and on the plantain-leaves. It beaded the slender grasses about the spring, and the young foliage of the alders, and the dazzling veils of the gossamer spiders. This time Dave took his rifle with him, and Miranda paid no heed to it.

The woods were drenching wet, but unusually pervaded with light. The new-risen sun sent its fresh rays far up the soundless vistas, and every damp leaf or shining facet of bark diffused its little dole of lustre to thin the gloom. As the sun got higher and the dew exhaled away, the twilight slightly deepened, the inexpressible clarity of the shadowed air returned, and the heart of the ancient wood resumed its magic. The awe, as of an enchantment working unseen, the meaning and expectant stillness, the confusion of near and far, the unreality of the familiar, all this gripped the imaginations of the two travellers just as sharply as if they had not been all their lives accustomed to it. The mystery of the ancient wood was not to be staled by use. These two, sensitive to its spell as a surface of glass to a breath, lay open to it in every nerve, and a tense silence fell upon their lips. In the silence was

understanding of each other. It was Dave's most potent wooing, against which Miranda had no warning, no defence.

As they walked thus noiselessly, light-footed as the furtive folk themselves, suddenly from a bit of open, just ahead of them, there came the slender, belling cry of a young deer. They had arrived now, after three hours' rapid walking, at a part of the forest unknown to Miranda. The open space was rock thinly covered with mosses and vines, an upthrust of the granite foundations of a hill which towered near by.

It was an unheard-of thing for a young deer to give cry so heed-lessly amid the perilous coverts of the wood. Both the travellers instinctively paused, and then stole forward with greater caution, peering through the branches. To the forest-dwellers, beast or human, the unusual is always the suspicious, and therefore to be investigated. A few paces carried them both to a point where Miranda caught sight of the imprudent youngling.

"Hush!" she whispered, laying her hand on Dave's arm. "Look!

the poor little thing's lost. Don't frighten it."

"There'll be something else'll frighten it afore long," muttered

Dave, "if it don't quit its bl'atin'."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the little animal jumped, trembled, started to run, and then looked piteously from side to side, as if uncertain which way to flee and from what peril. An instant more and the grayish-brown form of a lynx shot like lightning from the underbrush. It caught the young deer by the throat, dragged it down, tore it savagely, and began drinking its blood.

"Kill it! kill it!" panted Miranda, starting forward. But Dave's

hand checked her.

"Wait," he said firmly. "The little critter's dead; we can't do it no good; wait, an' we'll git both the varmints. There'll be a pair of 'em."

Under ordinary circumstances Miranda would have resented the idea of getting "both the varmints," but just now she was savage with pity for the young deer, and she chose to remember vindictively that far-off day when Ganner had come to the Clearing, and only the valor of Star, the brindled ox, had saved herself and Michael, the calf, from a cruel death. She obeyed Dave's command, therefore, and waited.

But there was another who would not wait. The mother doe had heard her lost little one's appeal. In wild haste, but noiseless on the deep carpet of the moss, she came leaping to the cry. She saw what Miranda and Dave saw. But she did not pause to calculate, or weigh the odds against her. With one bound she was out in the open. With the next she was upon the destroyer. The hungry lynx looked up just in time to avoid the fair impact of her descending hoofs, which would

have broken his back. As it was, he caught a glancing blow on the flank, which ripped his fine fir and hurled him several paces down the slope.

Before he could fully recover the deer was upon him again, and Miranda, her eyes glowing, her cheeks scarlet with excitement and exultation, clutched her companion's arm with such a grip that her fine fingers hurt him deliciously. The lynx, alarmed and furious, twisted himself over and fixed both claws and teeth in his adversary's leg, just below the shoulder. Fierce and strong as he was, he was, nevertheless, getting badly punished, when his mate appeared bounding down the slope, and with a sharp snarl sprang upon the doe's neck, bearing her to her knees.

"Shoot! shoot!" cried Miranda, springing away from Dave's side to give him room. But his rifle was at his shoulder ere she spoke. With the word his shot rang out, and the second assailant dropped to the ground, kicking. Immediately Dave ran forward. lynx, disentangling himself, darted for cover, but just as he was disappearing Dave gave him the second barrel at short range, and the bullet caught him obliquely across the hind-quarters, breaking his spine. Dave was noted as the best shot in all that region, but the marksmanship which he had just displayed was lost on Miranda. She took it for granted that to shoot was to hit, and to hit was to kill, as a matter of course. Dave's first shot had killed. The animal was already motionless. But the writhings of the other lynx, prone in the bush, tore her heart.

"Oh, how it's suffering! Kill it, quick!" she panted. Dave ran up, swung his rifle in a short grip, and struck the beast a settling blow at the base of the skull. The deer, meanwhile, limping and bleeding, but not seriously the worse for her dreadful encounter, hobbled back to where the body of her young lay stretched upon the moss. sniffed at it for a moment with her delicate nose, satisfied herself that it was quite dead, then moved off slowly into the shadows.

Miranda went to each of the three slain animals in turn and looked at them thoughtfully, while Dave waited in silence, uncertain what to do next. He felt that it behooved him to step warily while Miranda was wrestling with emotions. At last she said, with a sob in her voice and her eyes very bright and large,-

"Come, let's get away from this horrid place!"

Dave experienced a certain mild pang at the thought of leaving two good pelts behind him to be gnawed by foxes, but he followed Miranda without a word. It would have been a fatal error to talk of furs at that moment. As soon, however, as they were out of sight of the open slope, he turned aside and headed their course towards a rocky knoll which was visible through the trees.

"What are you going that way for?" asked Miranda.

"Likely the lou'-cerfies had their den in the rocks yonder," was the reply; "we must find it."

"What do we want of their den?" queried the girl in surprise.

"There'll be a couple of lou'-cerfie kittens in it, I reckon," said Dave, "an' we must find 'em."

"What for?" demanded Miranda suspiciously.

Dave looked at her.

"Ye've had me shoot the father an' mother, Mirandy," he said slowly, "for the sake of the deer. An' now would ye hev the little ones starve to death?"

"I never thought of that, Dave," answered the girl, smitten with remorse, and she looked at him with a new approval. She thought to herself that he, hunter and blood-stained as he was, showed yet a readier and more reasonable tenderness for the furry kindred than she herself.

For nearly half an hour they searched the hollows of the rocky knoll, and at last came upon a shallow cave overhung darkly by a mat of dwarf cedar. There were bones about the entrance, and inside, upon a bed of dry moss, were two small, rusty-brown, kitten-like objects, curled softly together. Miranda's discerning vision perceived them at once, but it took Dave's eyes some seconds to adapt themselves to the gloom. Then the furry ball of "lou'-cerfie" kittens looked to him very pretty,—something to be fondled and protected. He knew well how their helplessness would appeal to Miranda's tender heart. Nevertheless, with a firmness of courage which, under the circumstances, few heroes would have arisen to, he stepped forward, stooped, untangled the soft ball, and with the heavy handle of his hunting-knife struck each kitten just one sharp stroke on the neck, killing it instantly and easily.

"Poor little critters," he muttered, "it was the only thing to do with 'em," and he turned to Miranda.

The girl had backed out of the cave and now stood, with flushed face, staring at him fiercely.

"You brute!" she exclaimed.

Dave had been prepared for some discussion of his action, but he was not prepared for just this. He drew himself up.

"I did think ye was a woman grown, an' for all yer idees were kind of far-fetched, I've respected 'em a heap; an' I won't say but what they've influenced me, too. But now I see ye're but a silly child an' don't reason. Did ye think, may be, these here leetle mites o' things could live an' take keer o' themselves?"

He spoke coldly, scornfully; and there was a kind of mastery in his voice that quelled her. She was astonished too. The color in her face deepened, but she dropped her eyes. "I wanted to take them home and tame them," she explained, quite humbly.

Dave's stern face softened.

"Ye'd never 'a' been able to raise 'em! They're too young, a sight too young. See, their eyes ain't open. They'd have jest died on yer hands, Mirandy, sure an' sartain!"

"But—how could you!" she protested with no more anger left, but a sob of pity in her throat.

"It was jest what you do to the fish ye ketch, Mirandy, to stop their sufferin'."

Miranda looked up quickly, and her eyes grew large.

"Do you know, I never thought of that before, Dave," she replied. "I'll never catch a fish again, long as I live! Let's get away from here."

"Ye see," began Dave, making up his mind to sow a few seeds of doubt in Miranda's mind as to the correctness of her theories.-" ve see, Mirandy, 'tain't possible to be consistent right through in this life, but what ye'll find life'll make a fool o' ye at one point or another. I ain't a-goin' to say I think ye're all wrong, not by no means. Sence I've seen the way ye understand the live critters of the woods, an' how they understand you, I've come to feel some different about killin' 'em myself. But, Mirandy, nature's nature, an' ye can't do much by buckin' up agin her. Look, now, ye told me to shoot the loo'-cerfie coz he killed the deer-kid. But he didn't go to kill it for ugliness, nor jest for himself to make a dinner off, you know that. He killed it for his mate, too. Lou'-cerfies ain't built so's they can eat grass. If the she-lou'cerfie didn't git the meat she needed, her kittens'd starve. She's jest got to kill. Nature's put that law onto her, -an' onto the painters, an' the foxes an' wolves, the 'coons an' the weasels. An' she's put the same law, only not so heavy, onto the bears, an' also onto humans, what's all built to live on all kinds of food, meat among the rest. An' to live right, an' be their proper selves, they've all got to eat meat sometimes, for nature don't stand much foolin' with her laws."

"Im well," interrupted Miranda eagerly, with the obvious retort.

"Maybe ye won't be always," suggested Dave.

"Then I'll be sick,—then I'll die,—before I'll eat meat!" she protested passionately. "What's the good of living, anyway, if it's nothing but kill, kill, kill? and for one that lives a lot have got to die."

Dave shook his head soberly.

"That's what nobody, fur's I can see, Mirandy, has ever been able to make out yet. I've thought about it a heap, an' read about it a heap, alone in camp, an' I can't noways see through it. Oftentimes it's seemed to me all life was jest like a few butterflies flitterin' over a graveyard. But all the same, if we don't go to too much foolish worryin'

'bout what we can't understand, we do feel it's good to be alive,—an' I do think, Mirandy, this life *might* be somethin' finer than the finest kind of a dream."

Something in his voice, at these last words, thrilled Miranda and at the same time put her on her guard.

"Well," she exclaimed positively, if not relevantly, "I'm never

going to catch another fish."

The answer not being just what Dave needed for the support of his advance, he lost courage and let the conversation drop.

XVII.

IN THE ROAR OF THE RAPIDS.

A LITTLE before noon, when the midsummer heat of the outside world came filtering faintly down even into the cool vistas of the forest, and here and there a pale-blue butterfly danced with his mate across the clear shadow, and the aromatic wood-smells came out more abundantly than was their wont at the lure of the pervasive warmth, the travellers halted for noon-meal. Sitting on a fallen hemlock-trunk beside a small but noisy brook, it was a frugal meal they made on the cheese and dark bread which Kirstie had put in Dave's satchel. Their halt was brief, and as they set out again Dave said:

"'Tain't a mile from here to the Big Fork. Gabe's canoe's hid in the bushes just where this here brook falls in. Noisy, ain't it?"

"I love the sound," exclaimed Miranda, stepping quickly and gayly, as if the light, musical clamor of the stream had got into her blood.

"Well, the Big Fork's a sight noisier," continued Dave. "It's heavy water, an' jest rapids on rapids all the way down to Gabe's clearing. Ye won't be skeered, Mirandy?"

The girl gave one of her rare laughs, very high-pitched, but brief, musical, and curiously elusive. She was excited at the prospect.

"I reckon you know how to handle a canoe, Dave," was all she said. The trust in her voice made Dave feel himself measurably nearer his purpose. He dared not speak, lest his elation should betray itself.

In a little there came another sound, not drowning or even obscuring the clear prattle of the brook, but serving as a heavy background to its brightness. It was a large yet soft pulsating thunder, and seemed to come from all sides at once,—as if far-off herds, at march over hollow lands, were closing in upon them. Dave looked at Miranda. She gave him a shining glance of comprehension.

"It's the rapids!" she cried. "Do we go through those?"

Dave laughed.

"Not those! Not by a long chalk! That's the 'Big Soo' ye hear, an' it's more a fall than a rapid. There's an eddy an' a still-water jest below, an' that's where we take to the canoe."

As they went on, the great, swelling noise seemed to Miranda to fill her soul, and worked a deep yet still excitement within her. Nevertheless, rapidly as its volume increased, the light chatter of the brook was upborne distinctly upon the flood of it. Then, suddenly, as the forest thinned ahead and the white daylight confronted them, the voice of the brook was in an instant overwhelmed, utterly effaced. The softly pervasive thunder burst all at once into a trampling roar, vehement, conflicting, explosive, and they came out full in face of a long, distorted slope of cataract. White, yellow, tawny green, the waves bounded and wallowed down the loud steep, and here and there the black bulks of rock shouldered upward, opposing them eternally.

Spell-bound at the sight, Miranda stood gazing, while Dave fetched from the bushes a ruddy-yellow canoe of birch-bark, and launched it in a quiet but foam-flecked backwater at their feet. In the bow he placed a compact bundle of bracken for Miranda to sit upon, with another flat bundle at her back that the cross-bar might not gall her.

"Best fer ye to sit low, Mirandy, 'stead o' kneelin'," he explained; "coz I'll be standin' up with the pole goin' through some o' the rips, an' ye'll be steadier sittin' than kneelin'."

"But I paddle better kneeling," protested Miranda.

"Ye won't need to paddle," said Dave a little grimly. "Ye'll jest maybe fend a rock now an' agin, that's all! The current an' me'll do the rest."

The fall of the "Big Soo" ended in a basin very wide and deep, whose spacious caverns absorbed the fury of the waters and allowed them to flow off sullenly. Dave knelt in the stern, paddle in hand and the long pole of white spruce sticking out behind the canoe where he could lay his grasp upon it in an instant. A couple of strokes sent the little craft out into the smooth, purplish-amber swirls of the deep current, whereon the froth-clusters wheeled slowly. A few minutes more and a green-fringed overhang of rock was rounded, the last energy of the current spent itself in a deep and roomy channel, the uproar of the cataract mellowed suddenly to that pulsating thunder which they had heard at first, and the canoe, under Dave's noiseless propulsion, shot forward over a surface of dark-brown glass. There was a mile of this still-water, along which Miranda insisted upon paddling. The rocks rose straight from the channel, and the trees hung down from their rim, and the June sun, warmly flooding the trough of rock and water, made its grimness greatly beautiful. Then the rocks diminished, and the steep, richly green slopes of the hill-sides came down to the water's edge, and a rushing clamor began to swell in the distance. The currents awakened under the canoe, which darted forward more swiftly. The shouting of the "rips" seemed to rush up-stream to meet them. The surface of the river began to slant away before them, not breaking

yet, but furrowing into long, thready streaks. Then, far down the slant, a tossing white line of short breakers, drawn right across the

channel, clambered towards them ravenously.

"Ye'd better not paddle now, Mirandy," said Dave in a quiet voice, standing up for a moment to survey the channel, while the canoe slipped swiftly down towards the turmoil. "There's rapids now all the way down to Gabe's clearing. An' we won't be very long goin' through 'em, neither."

A moment more, and to Miranda it seemed that the leafy shores ran by her, that the gnashing phalanx of the waves sprang up at her. She had never run a rapid before. Her experience of canoeing had all been gained on the lake. She caught her breath, but did not flinch, as the tumbling waters seethed and yammered around her. Then her blood ran hot with the excitement of it, her nerves tingled. She wanted to cry out, to paddle wildly and fiercely. But she held herself under curb. She never moved. Only the grip of her hands on the paddle, which lay idle before her, tightened till the knuckles went white. There was no word from Dave, no sign of his presence save that the canoe shot straight as an arrow, and bit firmly upon the big surges, so that she knew his wrist of steel was in control. Suddenly just ahead sprang a square black rock, against which the mad rush of water upreared and fell back broken to either side. The canoe leaped straight at it, and Miranda held her breath.

"Stroke on the right!" came Dave's sharp order. She dipped her paddle strenuously twice,—thrice,—and, swerving at the last moment, while the currents seethed up along her bulwarks, the canoe darted

safely past.

Miranda stopped paddling. There was a steeper slope in front, but a clear channel, the waves not high but wallowing inward towards the centre. Straight down this centre rushed the canoe, the surges clutching at her on both sides, yellow-green with white foam-streaks veining their very hearts. At the foot of the slope, singing sharply and shining in the sun, curved a succession of three great "ripples," stationary in mid-channel, their back-curled crests thin and prismatic. Straight through these Dave steered. The three thin crests, thus swiftly divided, one after another, slapped Miranda coldly in the face, drenching her, and leaving a good bucketful of water in the canoe.

"Oh!" gasped Miranda, at the shock, and shook her hair, laughing

excitedly.

There was gentler water now for a hundred yards or so, and Dave steered cautiously for shore.

"We'll hev to land an' empty her out," said he. "Ther's no more big 'ripples' like them there on the whole river, an' we won't take in water agin 'twixt here an' Gabe's." "I don't care if we do!" exclaimed Miranda fervently. "It was splendid, Dave. And you did it just fine!"

This commendation took him aback somewhat, and he was unable to show his appreciation of it except by a foolish grin, which remained on his face while he turned the canoe over and while he launched it again. It was still there when Miranda resumed her place in the bow, and, strangely enough, she felt no disposition to criticise him for it.

The rest of the journey, lasting nearly an hour longer, was a ceaseless succession of rapids, with scant and few spaces of quiet water between. None were quite so long and violent as the first; but by the time the canoe slowed up in the reach of still water that ran through the interval meadow of Gabe's clearing, Miranda felt fagged from the longsustained excitement. She felt as if it had been she, not Dave, whose unerring eye and unfailing wrist had brought the canoe in triumph through the menace of the roaring races.

They landed on the blossoming meadow strip, and Dave turned the cance over among the grasses, under the shade of an elm that would serve to keep the afternoon sun from melting the rosin off the seams. Gabe's cabin stood a stone's throw back from the meadow, high enough up the slope to be clear of the spring freshets. It was a bare, uncared-for place, with black stumps still dotting all the fields of buckwheat and potatoes, a dishevelled-looking barn, and no vine or bush about the house. It gave Miranda a pang of pity to look at it. Her own cabin was lonely enough, but with a high, austere, clear loneliness, that seemed to hold communion with the stars. The loneliness of this place was a shut-in, valley loneliness, without horizons and without hope. She felt sorry almost to tears for the white and sad-eyed woman who appeared in the cabin door to welcome them.

"Sary Ann, this is Mirandy I spoke to ye about."

The two women shook hands somewhat shyly, and, after the silent fashion of their race, said nothing.

"How's Jimmy?" asked Dave.

"Baout the same, thank ye, Dave," replied the woman wearily, leading the way into the cabin.

In a low chair near the window, playing listlessly with a dingy redand-yellow rag doll, sat a thin-faced, pallid little boy, with long, pale curls down on his shoulders. He lifted sorrowful blue eyes to Miranda's face as she, with a swift impulse of tenderness and compassion, rushed forward and knelt down to embrace him. Her vitality and the loving brightness of her look won the child at once. His wan little face lightened. He lifted the baby mouth to be kissed. Miranda pressed his fair head to her bosom gently, and had much ado to keep her eyes from running over, so worked the love and pity and the mothering hunger in her heart. "He takes to ye, Mirandy," said the woman, smiling upon her. And Dave, his passion almost mastering him, blurted out proudly,—

"An' who wouldn't take to her, I'd like to know!"

He felt at this moment that Miranda was now all human, and could never quite go back to her mystic and uncanny wildness, her preference for the speechless furry kin over her own warm human kind. He produced the medicine from his satchel, and from Miranda's attentive hand Jimmy took the stuff as if it had been nectar. Jimmy's mother looked on with undisguised approval of the girl. Had she thought Miranda was going to stay any length of time her mother-jealousy would have been aroused, but as it was she was only exquisitely relieved at the thought of Jimmy being in some one else's care for a few hours. She whispered—audibly, a mere chaffing pretence of a whisper it was—to Dave:

"It's a right purty an' a right smart little wife she'll make fer ye, Dave Titus, an' she'll know how to mind yer babies. Ye're a lucky man,

an' I hope ye understand how lucky ye air."

Poor Dave! She might as well have thrown a bucket of cold water in his face! For an instant he could have strangled the kindly, coarse-grained, well-meaning, silly woman, who stood beaming her pale good-will upon them both. He cursed himself for not having warned her that Miranda could not be chaffed like a common Settlement girl. He saw Miranda's face go scarlet to the ears, though she bent low over Jimmy and pretended to have heard nothing, and he knew that in that moment his good work was all undone. For a few seconds he could say nothing, and the silence grew trying. Then he stammered out:

"I'm afeared there's no sich luck for me, Sary Ann, though God knows I want her. But Mirandy don't like me very well."

The woman stared at him incredulously.

"Lord sakes, Dave Titus, then what's she doin' here alone with you?" she exclaimed, the weariness coming back into her voice at the last of the phrase. "Oh, you go 'long! You don't know nothin' abaout women!"

This was quite too much for Dave, whose instincts, fined by long months in the companionship of only the great trees, the great winds, and the grave stars, had grown unerringly delicate. His own face flushed up now for Miranda's sake.

"I'd take it kindly of ye, Sary Ann, if ye quit the subject right there," he said quietly. But there was a firmness in his voice which the

woman understood.

"The both of yez must be nigh dead for somethin' to eat," she said.
"I must git ye supper right off." And she turned to the fireplace and filled the kettle.

Thereafter, through supper and through the short evening, Miranda had never a word for Dave. She talked a little, kindly and without showing her resentment, to Mrs. White, but her attentions were entirely absorbed in little Jimmy. Indeed, she had Jimmy very much to herself, for Mrs. White got Dave to help with the chores and the milking. Afterwards, about the hearth-fire,-maintained for its cheer and not for warmth,-Mrs. White confined her conversation largely to Dave. She was not angry at him on account of his rebuke, but vaguely aggrieved at Miranda as the cause of it. She began to feel that Miranda was different from other girls, from what she herself had been as a girl. Miranda's fineness and sensitiveness were something of an offence to her, though she could not define them at all. She characterized them vaguely by the phrase "stuck up," and became presently inclined to think that a fine fellow like Dave was too good for her. Still, she was a fair-minded woman in her worn, colorless way, and she could not but allow there must be a lot in Miranda if little Jimmy took to her so, "For a child knows a good heart," she said to herself.

Next morning soon after dawn the travellers were off, Miranda tearing herself with difficulty from little Jimmy's embrace, and leaving him in a desolation of tears. She was quite civil and ordinary with Dave now, so much so that good, obtuse, weary Mrs. White concluded that all was at rights again. But Dave felt the icy difference, and he was too proud, if not, for the time, too hopeless, to try to thaw it. During all the long, laborious journey upward through the rapids, by poling, he did wonders of skill and strength, but in utter silence. His feats were not lost upon Miranda, but she hardened her heart resolutely, for now a shame which she had never known before gave tenacity to her anger. Through it all, however, she couldn't help thrilling to the strife with the loud rapids, and exulting in the slow, inexorable conquest of them. The return march through the woods was in the main a silent one, as before; but how different a silence! Not electric with meaning, but cold, the silence of a walled chamber. And, as if the spirits of the wood maliciously enjoyed Dave's discomfiture, they permitted no incident, no diversion. They kept the wood-folk all away, they emptied of all life and significance the forest spaces. And Dave grew sullen.

Arriving back at the Clearing just before sundown, they paused at the cabin door. Dave looked into Miranda's eyes with something of reproach, something of appeal. Kirstie's voice, talking cheerfully to Kroof, came from the raspberry brambles behind the house. Miranda stretched out her hand with a cool frankness, and returned his look blankly.

"I've had a real good time, thank you, Dave," she said. "You'll find mother yonder picking raspberries."

XVIII.

THE FORFEIT OF THE ALIEN.

ALL through the summer and early autumn Dave continued his fortnightly visits to the cabin in the Clearing, and always Miranda treated him with the same cold, casual civility. She felt, or pretended to herself that she felt, grateful now to the blunt-fingered, wan woman over at Gabe White's, who had rudely jostled her back to her senses when she was on the very edge of giving up her freedom and her personality to a man,-a strong man, who would have absorbed her. She flung herself passionately once more into the fellowship of the furtive folk, the secrecy and wonder of the wood. As it was a human love which she was crushing out, and as she felt the need of humanity cravingly though not understandingly at her heart, she lavished upon Kirstie a demonstrativeness of affection such as she had never shown before. It pleased Kirstie, and she met it heartily in her calm, strong way; but she saw through it, and smiled at the back of her brain, scarcely daring to think her thought frankly lest the girl's intuition should discern it. She made much of Dave. but never before Miranda, and she kept encouraging the rather despondent man with the continual assertion, "It'll be all right, Dave. Don't fret, but bide your time." To which Dave responded by biding his time with a quiet, unaggressive persistence, and if he fretted he took pains not to show it.

If Dave had an ally in Kirstie, he had consistent antagonists in all the folk of the wood, for never before in all Miranda's semi-occult experience had the folk of the wood come so near to her. Kroof was her almost ceaseless companion, more devoted, if possible, than ever, and certainly more quick in comprehension of Miranda's English; and Kroof's cub, a particularly fine and well-grown young animal, was nigh as devoted as his mother. When these two were absent on some rare expedition of their own, undertaken by Kroof for the hardening of Cub's muscles, then the very foxes took to following Miranda, close to heel, like dogs; and one drowsy fall afternoon, when she had lain down to sleep on a sloping patch of pine-needles, the self-same big panther from whom she had rescued Dave came lazily and lay down beside her. His large purring at her ear awoke her. He purred still more loudly when she gently scratched him under the throat. She was filled with a curious exaltation as she marked how her influence over the wild things grew and widened. Nothing, she vowed, should ever lure her away from these clear shades, these silent folk whom she ruled by hand and eye, and this mysterious life which she alone could know. When old Dave, for whom she cared warmly, made his now frequent visits to the Clearing, she had an inclination to avoid him lest he should attack her purpose, and thought of little Jimmy's white face and baby mouth she put away obstinately, as most dangerous of all.

And so it came than when October arrived, and all the forest every-

where was noiselessly astir with falling leaves, and the light of the blue began to peer in upon the places which had been closed to it all summer, by that time Miranda felt quite secure in her resolve, and Dave's fight now was to keep the despair of his heart from writing itself large upon his face.

Towards the end of that October Dave's hunting took him around to the rocky open ground where, in the previous June, he and Miranda had encountered the lynxes. He was looking for fresh meat for Kirstie, and game, that day, had kept aloof. Just as he recognized, with a kind of homesick-ache of remembrance, the spot where he and Miranda had seemed, for a brief space, to be in perfect accord with each other,—how long ago and how unbelievable it appeared to him now!—his hunter's eye caught a sight which brought the rifle to his shoulder. Just at the edge of the open a young bear stood greedily stripping blueberries from the laden bushes, and grunting with satisfaction at the sweet repast.

"A bit of bear-steak," thought Dave, "will be jest the thing for Kirstie. She's gittin' a mite tired o' deer's meat!"

An unhurried aim, a sharp, slapping report,—and the handsome cub sank forward upon his snout, and rolled over, shot through the brain. Dave strode up to him. He had died instantly,—so instantly and painlessly that his half-open mouth was still full of berries and small, dark-green leaves. Dave felt his soft and glossy-dark coat.

"Ye're a fine young critter," he muttered half regretfully. "It was kind o' mean to cut ye off when ye was havin' such a good time all to yerself."

But Dave was not one to nurse an idle sentimentality. Without delay he skinned the carcass, and cached the pelt carefully under a pile of heavy stones, intending to return for it the first day possible. He was going to the Clearing now, and could not take a raw pelt with him to damn him finally in Miranda's eyes. But the skin was too fine a one to be left to the foxes and wolverines. When it was safely bestowed he cut off the choicest portions of the carcass, wrapped them in leaves, and tied them up in birch-bark, slung the package over his shoulder, and set out in haste for the Clearing. He was anxious that Kirstie should have bear-steaks for supper that night.

He had been but a little while gone from the rocky open, where the red carcass lay hideously affronting the sunlight, when another bear emerged in leisurely fashion from the shadows. It was an animal of huge size and with rusty fur that was graying about the snout. She paused to look around her. On the instant her body stiffened, and then she went crashing through the blueberry bushes to where that dreadful thing lay bleeding. She walked around it twice, with her nose in the air, and again with her nose to the ground. Then she backed away from it slowly down the slope, her stare fixed upon it

as if she expected it might rise and follow. At the edge of the wood she wheeled quickly, and went at a savage gallop along the trail which Dave had taken.

It was old Kroof, and Dave had killed her cub.

She rushed on madly, a terrible avenger of blood, but so fast was Dave journeying that it was not much short of an hour before her instinct or some keen sense told her that he was close at hand. She was not blinded by her fury. Rather was she coolly and deliberately set upon a sufficing vengeance. She moderated her pace and went softly, and soon caught sight of her quarry some way ahead, striding swiftly down the brown-shadowed vistas:

There was no other bear in all the forests so shrewd as Kroof, and she knew that for the hunter armed all her tremendous strength and fury were no match. She waited to catch him at a disadvantage. Her huge bulk kept the trail as noiselessly as a weasel or a mink. Young Dave, with all his wood-craft, all his alertness of sense, all his intuition, had no guess of the dark Nemesis which was so inexorably dogging his stride. He was in such haste that in spite of the autumn chill his hair clung moistly to his forehead. When he reached the rivulet flowing away from the cabin spring he felt that he must have a wash-up before presenting himself. Under a big hemlock he dropped his bundle, threw off his cap, his belt, his shirt, and laid down his loaded rifle. Then, bare to the waist, he went on some twenty paces to a spot where the stream made a convenient pool, and knelt down to give himself a thorough freshening.

Kroof's little eyes gleamed redly. Here was her opportunity.

She crept forward, keeping the trunk of the hemlock between herself and her foe, till she reached the things which Dave had thrown down under the tree. She sniffed at the rolled-up package and turned it over with her paw. Then, with one short, grunting cough of rage and pain, she launched herself upon the murderer of her cub.

That savage cry was Dave's first hint of danger. He looked up quickly, his head and shoulders dripping. He recognized Kroof. There was no time for choice. The luge animal was just upon him. But in that instant he understood the whole tragedy. His heart sickened. There was a great beech-tree just across the pool, almost within arm's length. With one bound he reached it. With the next he caught a branch and swung himself up, just eluding the vengeful sweep of Kroof's paw.

Nimbly he mounted, seeking a branch which would lead him to another tree and so back to the ground and his rifle; and Kroof, after a moment's pause, climbed after him. But Dave could not find what he sought. Few were the trees in the ancient wood whose topmost branches did not twine closely with their neighbor trees. But with a man's natural aversion to bathing in water that is not enlivened and

inspirited by the direct sunlight, Dave had chosen a spot where the trees were scattered and the blue of the sky looked in. He climbed to a height of some forty or fifty feet from the ground before he found a branch that seemed to offer any hope at all. Out upon this he stepped, steadying himself by a slenderer branch above his head. Following it as far as the branch would support him, he saw that his position was all but hopeless. He could not, even by the most accurate and fortunate swing, catch the nearest branch of the nearest tree. He turned back. But Kroof was already at the fork. Her claws were already fixed upon the branch. She was crawling out to him, slowly, inexorably. She had him in a trap.

Dave stood, tense and moveless, awaiting her. His face was white, his mouth set. He knew that in all human probability his hour was come. Yet what might be done he would do. Far below, between him and the mingling of rock and moss which formed the ground (he looked down upon it, checkered with the late sunlight), was a stout hemlock branch. At the last moment he would drop, and the branch—he would clutch at it—might perhaps break his fall, at least in part. It was a meagre chance, but his only one. He was not shaken by fear, but he felt aggrieved and disappointed at such a termination of his hopes. And the deadly irony of his fate stung him. The branch bent lower and lower as Kroof's vast weight drew near; the light branch above, too frail to endure his weight alone, still served to steady him, and he kept his head erect, challenging death.

It chanced that Miranda, not far off, had heard the roar with which Kroof had rushed to the attack. The fury of it had brought her in haste to the spot, surprised and apprehensive. She recognized Dave's rifle and hunting-shirt under the hemlock-tree, and her heart melted in a horrible fear. Then she saw Dave high up in the beech-tree, his bare shoulders gleaming through the russet leaves. She saw Kroof, now not three feet from her prey. She saw the hate in the beast's eyes and open jaws.

"Kroof!" she cried, in a tone of fierce command; and Kroof heeded her no more than if she had been the wind whispering. "Kroof! Kroof!" she cried again, in anguished appeal, in piercing terror, as the savage animal crept on. Dave did not turn his head, but he called down in a quiet voice:

"Ye can't do it this time, Mirandy. I guess it's good-by now, for good."

But Miranda's face had suddenly set itself to stone. She snatched up the rifle.

"Hold on!" she cried; and taking a careful, untrembling aim, she pulled first one trigger, then the other, in such quick succession that the two reports came almost as one. Then she dropped the weapon and stood staring wildly.

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The bear's body heaved convulsively for a moment, then seemed to fall together on the branch, clutching at it. A second later and it rolled off, with a leisurely motion, and came plunging downward, soft, massive, enormous. It struck the ground with a sobbing thud. Miranda gave a low cry at the sound, turned away, and leaned up against the trunk of the hemlock. Her face was towards the tree, and hidden in the bend of her arm.

Dave knew now that all he had hoped for was his. Yet, after the first overwhelming, choking throb of exultation, his heart swelled with pity for the girl, with pity and immeasurable tenderness. He descended from his refuge, put on his hunting-shirt and belt, looked curiously at the empty rifle where it lay on the moss, and kicked the corded package of meat into a thicket. Then he went and stood close beside Miranda.

After a moment or two he laid an arm about her shoulders and touched her with his large hand, lightly firm.

"Ye wonderful Mirandy," he said, "you've give me life over agin! I ain't a-goin' to thank ye, though, till I know what ye're goin' to do with me. My life's been jest all yours since first I seen ye a woman grown. What'll ye do with the life ye've saved, Mirandy?"

He pressed her shoulder close against his heart, and leaned over, not quite daring to kiss the bronze-dark hair on which he breathed. The girl turned suddenly, with a sob, and caught hold of him, and hid her face in his breast.

"Oh Dave!" she cried in a piteous voice, "take mother and me away from this place. I don't want to live at the Clearing any more. You've killed the old life I loved." And she broke into a storm of tears.

Dave waited till she was quieter. Then he said, "If I've changed your life, Mirandy, ye've changed mine a sight too. I'll hunt and trap no more, dear, an' the beasts 'll hev no more trouble along o' me. We'll sell the Clearing, an' go 'way down onto the Meramichi, where I can git a good job surveyin' lumber. I'm right smart at that. An' I reckon,—oh, I love ye, an' I need ye, an' I reckon I can make ye happy, ye wonderful Mirandy."

The girl heard him through, then gently released herself from his arms.

"You go and tell mother what I've done, Dave," she said in a steady voice, "and leave me here a little while with Kroof."

That evening, after Miranda had returned to the cabin, Kirstie and Dave came with spades and a lantern to the beech-tree by the pool. Where they could find room in the rocky soil they dug a grave, and they buried old Kroof deeply, that neither might the claws of the wolverine disturb her, nor any lure of spring suns waken her from her sleep.

THE STORMING OF BADAJOS

BY STEPHEN CRANE Author of "The Red Badge of Courage," etc.

SECOND IN THE SERIES OF "GREAT BATTLES OF THE WORLD"

IN studying the campaign in the Peninsula, one must remember first of all that the man who was made Earl of Wellington for the victory at Ciudad Rodrigues was not the great potentiality who, as the Duke of Wellington, influenced England after Waterloo. During the Peninsula campaign Wellington was afflicted at all times by a bitter and suspicious Parliament at home. They had no faith in him, and they strenuously objected to furnishing him with money and supplies. Wellington worked with his hands tied behind him against the eager and confident armies of France. We ourselves can read in our more frank annals how a disgruntled part of Congress was forever wishing to turn Washington out of his position as head of the colonial forces. Parliament doled supplies to Wellington with so niggardly a hand that again and again he was forced to stop operations for the want of provisions and arms. At one time he actually had been told to send home the transports in order to save the expense of keeping them at Lisbon. The warfare in Parliament was not deadly, but it was more acrimonious than the warfare in the Peninsula. Moreover, the assistance to his arms from Portugal was so wavering, uncertain, and dubious, that he could place no faith in it. The French Marshals, Soult and Marmont, had a force of nearly one hundred thousand men.

Wellington held Lisbon, but if he wished to move in Portugal, there always frowned upon him the fortified city of Badajos. But finally there came his chance to take it, if it could be taken in a rush, while Soult and Marmont were widely separated and Badajos was left in a very confident isolation.

Badajos lies in Spain five miles from the Portuguese frontier. It was the key of a situation. Wellington's chance was to strike at Badajos before the two French Marshals could combine and crush him. His task was both in front of him and behind him. He lacked transport; he lacked food for the men; the soldiers were eating cassavaroot instead of bread; the bullocks were weak and emaciated. All this was the doing of the Parliament at home. But Wellington knew that the moment to strike had come, and he seems to have hesitated very little. Placing no faith in the tongues of the Portuguese, he made his plans with all possible secrecy. The guns for the siege were loaded on board the transports at Lisbon and consigned to a fictitious address. But in the river Sadao they were placed

upon smaller vessels, and finally they were again landed and drawn by bullocks to Eloas, a post in the possession of the allies. Having stationed two-thirds of his force under General Graham and General Hill to prevent a most probable interference by Soult and Marmont, Wellington advanced, reaching Eloas on the 11th of March, 1812. He had made the most incredible exertions. The stupidity of the Portuguese had vied with the stupidity of the government at home. Wellington had been carrying the preparation for the campaign upon his own shoulders. If he was to win Badajos, he was to win it with no help save that from gallant and trustworthy subordinates. He was ill with it. Even his strangely steel-like nature had bent beneath the trouble of preparation amid such indifference. But on March 16th, Beresford with three divisions crossed the Guadiana on pontoons and flying bridges, drove in the enemy's outposts, and invested Badajos.

At the time of the investment the garrison was composed of five thousand French, Hessians, and Spaniards. Spain had always considered this city a most important barrier against any attack through Portugal. A Moorish castle stood three hundred feet above the level of the plain. Bastions and fortresses enwrapped the town. Even the Cathedral was bomb-proof. The Guadiana was crossed by a magnificent bridge, and on the further shore the head of this bridge was strongly fortified.

Wellington's troops encamped to the east of the town. It was finally decided first to attack the bastion of Trinidad. The French commander had strengthened all his defences, and by damming a stream had seriously obstructed Wellington's operations. Parts of his force were confronted by an artificial lake two hundred yards in width.

The red coats of the English soldiers were now faded to the yellow brown of fox's fur. All the military finery of the beginning of the century was tarnished and torn. But it was an exceedingly hard-bitten army, certain of its leaders, despising the enemy, full of ferocious desire for battle.

Perhaps the bastion of Trinidad was chosen because it was the nearest to the intrenchments of the allies. In those days the frontal attack was possible of success. On the night of the 17th of March the British broke ground within one hundred and sixty yards of Fort Picerina. The sound of the digging was muffled by the roar of a great equinoctial storm. The French were only made wise by the daylight, but in the meantime the allies had completed a trench six hundred yards long and three feet deep, and with a communication four thousand feet in length. The French announced their discovery by a rattle of musketry, but the allies kept on with their digging, while general officers wrapped in their long cloaks paced to and fro directing the work.

The situation did not please the French General at all. He knew that something must be done to counteract the activity of the besiegers. He was in command of a very spirited garrison. On the night of the 19th a sortie was made from the Talavera Gate by both cavalry and infantry. The infantry began to demolish the trench of the allies. The cavalry divided itself into two parts and went through a form of sham fight which in the darkness was deceptive. When challenged by the pickets they answered in Portuguese, and thus succeeded in galloping a long way behind the trenches, where they cut down a number of men before their identity was discovered and they were beaten back. General Phillipon, the French commander, had offered a reward for every captured intrenching tool. Thus the French infantry of the sortie devoted itself largely to making a collection of picks and spades. Men must have risked themselves with great audacity for this reward, since they left three hundred dead on the field, but succeeded in carrying off a great number of the intrenching tools.

Great rain-storms now began to complicate the work of the besiegers. The trenches became mere ditches half-full of discolored water. This condition was partly improved by throwing in bags of sand. On the French side a curious device had been employed as a means of communication between the gate of the Trinidad bastion and Fort San Roque. The French soldiers had begun to dig, but had grown tired, so they finished by hanging up a brown cloth. This to the besiegers' eyes was precisely like the fresh earth of a parallel, and behind it the

French soldiers passed in safety.

Storm followed storm. The Guadiana, swollen past all tradition by these furious downpours, swept away the flying bridges, sinking twelve pontoons. For several days the army of the allies was entirely without food, but they stuck doggedly to their trenches, and when communication was at last restored it was never again broken. The weather cleared, and the army turned grimly with renewed resolution to the business of taking Badajos. This was in the days of the forlorn hope. There was no question of anything but a desperate and deadly frontal attack. The command of the assault of Fort Picerina was given to General Kempt. He had five hundred men, including engineers, sappers, and miners, and fifty men who carried axes. At nine o'clock they marched. The night was very dark. The fort remained silent until the assailants were close. Then a great fire blazed out at them For a time it was impossible for the men to make any progress. The palisades seemed insurmountable, and the determined soldiers of England were falling on all sides. In the meantime there suddenly sounded the loud, wild notes of the alarm-bells in the besieged city, and the guns of Badajos awakened and gave back thunder for thunder to the batteries of the allies. The confusion was worse than in the mad nights

on the heath in King Lear, but amid the thundering and the death, Kempt's fifty men with axes walked deliberately around Fort Picerina, until they found the entrance gate. They beat it down and rushed in. The infantry with their bayonets followed closely. Lieutenant Nixon of the Fifty-second Foot (now the Second Battalion of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry) fell almost on the threshold, but his men ran on. The interior of the fort became the scene of a terrible hand-tohand fight. All of the English did not come into the gate. Some of Kempt's men now succeeded in establishing ladders against the rampart, and swarmed over to the help of their comrades. The struggle did not cease until more than half of the little garrison were killed. Then the commandant, Gaspar Thiery, surrendered a little remnant of eighty-six Others who had not been killed by the British had rushed out and been drowned in the waters of that inundation which had so troubled Wellington and so pleased the French General. Phillipon had estimated that the Picerina would endure for five days, but it had been taken in an hour, albeit one of the bloodiest hours in the annals of a modern army.

Wellington was greatly pleased. He was now able to advance his earthworks close to the eastern part of the town, while his batteries played continually on the front of Fort San Roque and the two north-

ern bastions, Trinidad and Santa Maria.

But at the last of the month Wellington was confronted by his chief fear. News came to him that Marshal Soult was advancing rapidly from Cordova. It was now a simple question of pushing the siege with every ounce of energy contained in his army. Forty-eight guns were made to fire incessantly, and although the French reply was destructive, the English guns were gradually wearing away the three great defences. By the 2d of April Trinidad was seriously damaged, and one flank of Santa Maria was so far gone that Phillipon set his men at work on an inner defence to cut the last-named bastion off from the city. On the night of the 2d an attack was made on the dam of the inundation. Two British officers and some sappers succeeded in gagging and binding the sentinel guarding the dam, and having piled barrels of gunpowder against it, they lighted a slow-match and made But before the spark could reach the powder the French arrived under the shelter of the comic brown cloth communication. The explosion did not occur, and the inundation still remained to hinder Wellington's progress. On the 6th it was thought that three breaches were practicable for assault, and the resolute English General ordered the attack to be made at once. To Picton, destined to attach his name to the imperishable fame of Waterloo, was given an arduous task. He was to attack on the right and scale the walls of the castle of Badajos, which were from eighteen to twenty-four feet high. On the left General Walker, marching to the south, was to make a false attack on

Fort Pardaleras, but a real one on San Vincente, a bastion on the extreme west of the town. In the centre the Fourth Division and Wellington's favorite Light Division were to march against the breaches. The Fourth was to move against Trinidad, and the Light Division against Santa Maria. The columns were divided into storming and firing parties. The former were to enter the ditch while the latter fired over them at the enemy. Just before the assault was to be sounded a French deserter brought the intelligence that there was but one communication from the Castle to the town, and Wellington decided to send against it an entire division. Brigadier-General Power with his semi-useless Portuguese brigade was directed to attack the head of the bridge and the other works on the right of the Guadiana.

The army had now waited only for the night. When it had come, thick mists from the river increased the darkness. At ten o'clock Major Wilson, of the Forty-eighth Foot (now the First Battalion of the Northamptonshire regiment), led a party against Fort San Roque so suddenly and tempestuously that the work capitulated almost immediately At the Castle, General Picton's men had placed their ladders and swarmed up them in the face of showers of heavy stones, logs of wood, and crashing bullets, while at the same time they were under a heavy fire from the left flank. The foremost were bayoneted when they reached the top, and the besieged Frenchmen grasped the ladders and tumbled them over with their load of men. The air was full of wild screams as the English fell towards the stones below. Presently every ladder was thrown back, and for the moment the assailants had to run for shelter against a rain of flying missiles.

In this moment of uncertainty one man, Lieutenant Ridge, rushed out, rallying his company. Seizing one of the abandoned ladders, he planted it where the wall was lower. His ladder was followed by other ladders, and the troops scrambled with revived courage after this new and intrepid leader. The British gained a strong foot-hold on the ramparts of the Castle, and every moment added to their strength as Picton's men came swarming. They drove the French through the Castle and out at the gates. They met a heavy reinforcement of the French, but after a severe engagement they were finally and triumphantly in possession of the Castle. Lieutenant Ridge had been killed.

But at about the same time the men of the Fourth Division and of the Light Division had played a great and tragic part in the storming of Badajos. They moved against the great breach in stealthy silence. All was dark and quiet as they reached the glacis. They hurled bags full of hay in the ditch, placed their ladders, and the storming parties of the Light Division, five hundred men in all, hurried to this desperate attack.

But the French General had perfectly understood that the main attacks would be made at his three breaches, and he had made the great breach the most impregnable part of his line. The English troops, certain that they had surprised the enemy, were suddenly exposed by dozens of brilliant lights. Above them they could see the ramparts crowded with the French. These fire-balls made such a vivid picture that the besieged and besiegers could gaze upon one another's faces at distances which amounted to nothing. There was a moment of this brilliance, and then a terrific explosion rent the air. Hundreds of shells and powder-barrels went off together, and the English already in the ditch were literally blown to pieces. Still their comrades crowded after them with no definite hesitation. The French commander had taken the precaution to fill part of the ditch with water from the inundation, and in it one hundred fusiliers, men of Albuera, were drowned.

The Fourth Division and the Light Division continued the attack upon the breach. Across the top of it was a row of sword-blades fitted into ponderous planks, and these planks, chained together, were let deep into the ground. In front of them the slope was covered with loose planks studded with sharp iron points. The English, stepping on them, rolled howling backward, and the French yelled and fired unceasingly.

It was too late for the English to become aware of the hopelessness of their undertaking. Column after column hurled itself forward. Young Colonel Macleod, of the Forty-third Foot (now the First Battalion of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry), a mere delicate boy, gathered his men again and again and led them at the breach. A falling soldier behind him plunged a bayonet in his back, but still he kept on till he was shot dead within a yard of the line of sword-blades.

For two hours the besiegers were tirelessly striving to achieve the impossible, while the French taunted them from the ramparts,—

"Why do you not come into Badajos?"

Meanwhile, Captain Nicholas of the Engineers, with Lieutenant Shaw and about one hundred men of the Forty-third Foot, actually had passed through the breach of the Santa Maria bastion, but once inside they were met with such a fire that nearly every man dropped dead. Shaw returned almost alone.

Wellington, who had listened to these desperate assaults and watched them as well as he was able from a position on a small knoll, gave orders at midnight for the troops to retire and reform. Two thousand men had been slain. Dead and mangled bodies were piled in heaps at the entrance to the great breach, and the stench of burning flesh and hair was said to be insupportable.

And still, in the meantime, General Walker's brigade had made a feint against Pardaleras and passed on to the bastion of San Vincente. Here for a time everything went wrong. The fire of the French was frightfully accurate and concentrated. General Walker himself simply dripped blood; he was a mass of wounds. His ladders were found to be all too short. The walls of the fortress were thirty feet in height. However, through some lack of staying power in the French, success at last crowned the attack. One man clambered somehow to the top of the wall and pulled up others, until about half of the Fourth Foot (now the King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment) were fairly into the town. Walker's men took three bastions. General Picton, severely wounded, had not dared to risk losing the Castle, but now, hearing the tumult of Walker's success, he sent his men forth and thousands went swarming through the town. Phillipon saw that all was lost, and retreated with a few hundred men to San Christoval. He surrendered next morning to Lord Fitzrov Somerset.

The English now occupied the town. With their comrades lying stark, or perhaps in frightful torment, in the fields beyond the walls of Badajos, these soldiers, who had so heroically won this immortal victory, became the most abandoned, drunken wretches and maniacs. Crazed privates stood at the corners of streets and shot everyone in sight. Everywhere were soldiers dressed in the garb of monks, of gentlemen at court, or mayhap wound about with gorgeous ribbons and laces. Jewels and plate, silks and satins, all suffered a wanton destruction. Napier writes of "Shameless rapacity, brutal intemperance, savage lust, cruelty and murder, shrieks and piteous lamentations."

He further says that the horrible tumult was never quelled. It subsided through the weariness of the soldiers. One wishes to inquire why the man who was ultimately called the Iron Duke did not try to stop the shocking business. But one remembers that Wellington was a wise man, and he did not try to stop this shocking business because he knew that his soldiers were out of control and that if he tried he would fail.

FROM THE SANSCRIT OF BHARTAIHARI

BY THEODOSIA GARRISON

NE sayeth, "Surely this is Paradise
To lie close tented in her tender eyes;"
And one, "For me the nightingale and rose;"
And one, "For me the converse of the wise."

Yea, all these things are pleasant in man's sight; But those there are that hunger for the might Of silence and the brotherhood of stars In cool, calm spaces on the mountain height.

A CELTIC BEAUTY

BY SEUMAS MACMANUS

Author of "Through the Turf Smoke," "In Chimney Corners"

"H, Smedley? Isn't it just enchanting?" Tom cried.

"You've named it, my boy," I said. For, indeed, no ecstatic adjective could be too strong to describe the exquisite picture. From the rugged little knowe on which we sat we could almost drop a stone into the waters far below. The islets were many, very small, abrupt, and craggy; and on top of one of them an ancient thorn, the only bush that showed on any side, eked out existence. The sides of the bay were bold and rugged; and through the narrow entrance beyond the low-rolling sun was looking with grand effect.

"See?" said Tom in rapture, "the carpet woven of fine gold which

the sun has thrown to beneath our very feet-"

"Tom, do you really think does he take us for carpet-beaters out of a job?"

"Directly to our feet," Tom resumed, "as tempting us to wander away with him to the land of Heart's Desire—or to the *Tir-na-n'oig* of the Gael rather, the Land of Everlasting Youth!"

"Keep off the grass!" I said, eying Tom severely.

"For the Lord's sake, Smedley," said Tom with some impatience, "do not be so aggravating; and don't be giving yourself airs—any man may be a poet here."

"Granting," I added, "that he have some brains. You stick to making pictures, Tom Hawe, and leave the field of poetry to him who

has been born unto the heritage," and I tapped my breast.

"Ha! ha!" Tom laughed derisively. "And who, as fast as he can, is disposing of said heritage at so much a perch—I mean so much a foot——"

"That's wicked, Tom."

"—to gullible editors. Frank Smedley, I frankly believe that the only flower of poesy which blooms luxuriantly in that field of yours is—the thistle. You know the class of animal that is apt to browse with you."

"My dear Thomas—by the way, why don't they christen you Edward?—a hospitable gate shall always stand open to you."

"Hang your jaw! the sun has hauled in his carpet, and we've lost a truly golden opportunity."

"Ah, after a better look at you, Tom, he easily discovered that you were not a carpet-beater——"

"Thanks!"

"Only a sweep."

"I say, Smedley, look you at the cabin nestling under the big rock! What a study for a typical Donegal Cabin! I should like to make a sketch of it."

"Yes, a pretty sketch it would make, truly. And then if you could find or fancy a typical *Cailin*, barefooted and all, coming out of—Ha! ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!" he roared in hearty chorus; for just as I spoke a Cailin, barefooted, with a mass of jet-black hair hanging down her shoulders, and truly handsome so far as we could judge from where we sat, had come tripping from the door with a lilt upon her lips, heard my laugh, glanced up the knowe, and beholding two strangers observing her intently, fled with not ungraceful steps into shelter again.

"The plot thickens," cried Tom. "By Jupiter, Frank, a regular

little Celtic beauty!"

"Unquestionably a beauty, and a Celtic one," I replied.

Before we knew what we were about we were on our feet, and springing from hillock to hillock, going in the direction of the cabin. Tom Hawe in another minute suddenly pulled up with a laugh. I stopped too; we looked at each other and laughed foolishly.

"Where are we going?" said Tom.

"Faith, I don't know," I replied.

A brilliant idea struck me.

"I should think, Tom Hawe, a picture of that girl would mean money to you."

"You're right," said Tom, his eye brightening.

"But on what excuse may we venture to trespass in the cabin?"

Tom thought for a moment.

"Oh, I say!" said he, "weren't you complaining of thirst—some time this morning?"

"Ah, so I was-this morning."

"And it's now evening: so you must be raging with thirst."

We were bearing down upon the cabin as we spoke.

"I believe I am. But," here I felt dismayed, "see what rills of pure water run down here."

Tom's countenance dropped too.

"Ay, confound them!" he said. "Lord, though!" clapping me on the back, "you have hygienic objections to drinking out of streams?"

"By jove, yes! so I have. Tom, you're a brick."

"God save all here!" I said, using the salutation of the country, as I stooped to enter the door. Tom echoed my words.

"An' save yourselves kindly, gentlemen! Cead failte! Take a rest by the fire here, good sirs."

It was a white-haired, white-skinned, and white-capped old woman

who greeted us, and with her white apron wiping two white chairs, she placed them by the fire for us and dropped a truly elegant courtesy.

"A hundred welcomes!"

"Thank you. We'll just rest for a moment back here with your kind permission," and we removed our chairs back to the wall.

There wasn't a soul to be seen but the kind old woman. A room door opening off the kitchen was shut out. We glanced at it, and then meaningly at each other.

"Good strangers," the old woman said, "wasn't this the glorious

day, thank God for all His mercies?"

"Thank God, yes. It was glorious indeed. We've been wandering the hills all day and had a most delightful time of it. I have been feeling thirsty, though, and was anxiously looking out for a spring—but couldn't find one. So, I have ventured to intrude upon you, ma'am."

"Oh, Craithur!" she said with feeling, as she went to the dresser and selected two bowls. "There's no wan goes upon them hills but both hunger an' the thirst takes them. Yez must each i' ye have a

good, strengthenin', wholesome bowl i' sweet milk."

"Sabha!" she cried, as, trying the room door, she could not push it open. "Sabha! open the doore till I get the strange gentlemen a bowl i' milk—an' isn't it the mighty shame for yerself wouldn't 'a' come out iv that to bid them cead failte to the mountains!"

Here Tom nudged me, and I nudged Tom.

"And Sabha, too!" Tom whispered. "What a name to dream of!" The door opened, and as the old woman stepped in of it Sabha herself stepped out, a prettier vision even than we had suspected, and blushing furiously.

As she looked at us, all three, moved by some mysterious instinct, broke into a merry chorus of laughter. She was caught, and she frankly acknowledged it by her laugh. We had come in with that specific intention, and our laugh frankly acknowledged as much. The old woman from the room chimed into the laugh also, having possibly a glimmering of how matters stood. So, the air was cleared instantly.

"Gentlemen," said Sabha, dropping a bewitching courtesy, "ye are

heartily welcome to these wild regions."

Tom and I returned the courtesy with the air of a pair of dancing-masters.

"We are delighted, Miss Sabha," I said, "to hear it from your lips."

"Positively enchanted," said Tom.

She looked at us archly, making us laugh again. Then she took from the old woman's hands two flowing bowls of sweet milk, and presented one to each of us.

"It isn't much we can offer to ye in a backward place like this," she said.

"Backward place!" said Tom, and he waved his hand. "Why, this is Paradise, and we have received nectar from the hands of a Goddess."

Over her shoulder she cast a look at the old woman and laughed. The old woman laughed back. During this action Tom nudged me, and nodded towards her feet. They were small, beautifully formed, and exquisitely white, with a netting of blue veins.

"Miss Sabha," I said, determined that Tom shouldn't bestow all the compliments, "would you mind putting your lips to this ere I

taste it?"

"Ye didn't come from the County Cork, gentlemen?" Sabha said naïvely.

" No, England-London, Miss Sabha."

"Ah! I didn't think ye had a blarney-stone in that part o' the

Both Tom and I laughed—and the old woman joined us.

"Besides," she added roguishly, "if ye only miss me as much when ye're gone as ye miss me now, I'm sure I'll have a right to feel proud." And again she laughed over her shoulder to the old woman.

"By Jove!" said Tom to me. "La coquiné! fait l'esprit. Amu-

sons-nous d'elle."

"Is it impertinent to ask what language is that, good sir?" she said with a look of suppressed enjoyment of something or other in her eye.

"That?" said Tom. "Oh, that is," and he winked me to enjoy the joke with him, "Greek-to you, ahem !-I was remarking to my friend here that this is a blissful drink. So we may call you Sabha, then?"

Sabha was laughing outright at something.

"Yes," she said, "if it be pleasing to you, gentlemen. There's few in these rough parts used to either Miss or Mister, an' we'd be gettin' past ourselves with pride if ye addressed us so."

"A beautiful name it is," said I, "Sabha! And name and possessor seem made for each other. You do well to object to the Miss-

just fancy, Tom, Miss Cleopatra!"

"Oh! please permit me to faint," said Tom.

"Who is that young lady?"

"Miss Cleopatra?" I smiled, and Tom smiled.

Tom came to my rescue.

"She is the Queen of the Cannibal Islands," he said, "lately betrothed to the Heir-Apparent of Cariboo."

"And like yourself, Sabha, a paragon of beauty. Her portrait has been in all the illustrated papers."

"Her portrait? Her picture?"

"Yes, yes, her picture—that's what we mean by portrait."

"Sabha," Tom said, "how should you like your picture to appear in the same papers that published hers?"

- "Oh, that would be too nice for anything! But of course it never can."
 - "But of course it can," said Tom, sharpening a pencil.
 - "That is this fellow's trade, Sabha," I said.

"What! Drawing pictures of people?"

"Exactly! he's a rare old hand at drawing—whether it be pictures, checks, or the long bow; and his best friends fondly cherish the idea that he'll get hung ere long—either for one or another."

"Oh! how nice to be able to draw pictures of people! And you

can draw horses, and everything that way?"

"Yes," Tom said as he refined the point of his pencil, "horses—and asses; don't you see how I have drawn my friend after me in here. By the way, there's no use in tying up his talent in a blanket: you must know, Sabha, that he's a poet—a poet!—him!"

I attempted a blush with only partial success, as Sabha now turned

on me her admiring dark eyes.

"A poet! Makes—makes—ballads about murders, an' hanging,

and things?"

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!" and Tom burst into a boisterous, malicious laugh. "That's it—that's it, Sabha! That's him! You know all those beautiful ballads beginning, 'Come, all you men and maidens, and lend to me your lugs——'"

"Your ears," Sabha corrected.

"Is it 'your ears'? Well, lugs or ears as the case may be—his audience is the class generally adorned with lugs—it's he who commits those pretty verses. And that other style of ballad, too, 'As I moved out one morning and forgot to come back'—that's also a favorite line with my friend."

"Oh, now!" Sabha said, and turned on me a look of genuine wonder, which together with Tom's laugh made me, I confess, heartily un-

comfortable.

"Now, Sabha, I want to draw your picture," Tom said, having got

his pencil to his pleasement.

"Oh, no, no, not now! not as I am now!" Sabha cried, hastily pulling down a shawl, and wrapping round her head and shoulders, and of her pretty face leaving only the nose visible.

"And why not now, Sabha, my dear?"

"Oh, no, no! you must come again when I've got on my Sunday

gown, and my cloak, and hat, and shoes-and my face washed."

"God bless your innocence, I wouldn't have you at all that way—I mean—I beg your pardon—that in my eyes you would make ten times a better picture just as you are. Shoes! hide those pretty bare feet"—here Sabha hastily drew them in beneath the chair she sat on—" in dirty shoes——"

"I always wear clean shoes," Sabha said haughtily.

"In clean shoes, I mean—a thousand pardons!—hide such exquisite feet in clean shoes!" Tom laid on an emphasis here to make amends for his error. "And to put a val—to put a hat above those black tresses! That would be the depth and height of absurdity! And a Sunday gown and cloak! Put Venus into hoops and stays! My dear Sabha, I must have the picture of your delightful self as you are. That's a good child," and Tom stepped forward to remove the shawl.

"Oh, no, no, no! go away!" Whereupon she disengaged a little hand, and gave Tom a wicked blow on the chest. At the same time—whether by accident or design I could not say—one little white bare foot sprang out and, striking Tom's empty chair, slewed it noiselessly aside; so that when Tom, repulsed by the blow, backed to his place, he sat him-

self down where the chair was not.

I admit that I was more than delighted to behold the ludicrous figure he cut as he doubled up against the wall. He lay with knees and his nose in conjunction, and a sickly smile upon his face, whilst Sabha, unable to restrain herself, threw back the shawl and gave way to peal after peal of the most musical laughter that ever rang in these ears. She clapped her hands and laughed again, and yet again. The old woman laughed also most merrily, whilst I roared most desperately.

"Is the floor very hard?" Sabha innocently inquired of him, when he had got his seat again. And this set all of us off again at poor Tom's

expense.

"Sabha," said Tom, "you are very cruel! But, after getting such a rare fund of amusement out of me, you will surely grant me the privilege of getting your picture now?"

"No, no! not now," and Sabha was still bubbling over. "Come to-

morrow, and I'll be dressed for my picture."

"Will he have to tumble for you to-morrow also, Sabha?"

Sabha looked at Tom and smiled bewitchingly.

"Ah, that would be really too kind of him!" she said.

"Because," I said, "if he intends favoring us with a repetition of the performance, you might in the meantime invite some of your particular friends."

"It won't do, Sabha," said Tom. "I'll not have any dressing. I must get you as you are. Besides, to-morrow we intended devoting to a call upon your worthy parish priest, Father—Father—"

"Oh!" Sabha said, with suddenly augmented interest, "Father

Dan?"

"Yes, Father Dan Something-or-other, I believe."

"Father Dan MacGonnigle."

"That's the ticket, my dear, correct to the letter—Father Dan Mac—Mac—Something-you-say-in-your-throat."

Sabha looked at the old woman, the old woman at Sabha, and both burst into merry laughter.

"Then if you call on Father Dan to-morrow, you can get my picture the day after. Do you know Father Dan?"

"Not at all, my dear, but we intend cultivating his interesting ac-

quaintance without further delay-"

"And the still more interesting acquaintance," I said, "of his pretty niece. We've been told that he has a deuced hanmsome little doll of a niece—hasn't he? I'm going to make furious love to her myself, and I've fetched this fellow with me the whole way from London for no other purpose than to spin yarns to the good Padre whilst I court the niece—see?"

Sabha was looking at me as I spoke with eyes of wonder which gradually melted in merriment. She looked over her shoulder at the old woman, the old woman looked at her, and both laughed merrily and loud.

"Sabha," Tom said, "you are not to take this fellow too seriously. I have taken him to Ireland to amuse me—and the natives. I pay him handsomely, and permit him the occasional liberty of dropping flat jokes on my own head. It will be his duty to-morrow to amuse the Padre—mine to kiss the niece."

"Oh! how nice!" said Sabha.

"Is she worth kissing, Sabha?"

"Now I couldn't answer ye that, ye know. It's a matter of taste, I suppose"

"Kissing? Oh, certainly. Well, Tom, I beg to forewarn you that if this niece is going to turn out a fright the kissing matter is going to

devolve on your shoulders."

"Did you say she was a fright?" inquired Tom. "Why, our friend Hartley, who has given us a letter of introduction to Father Noise-in-the-throat, told us she was worth coming all the way from London to see. She was here on holidays from some convent on the Continent, where she was acquiring her isms and ologies when he was around. It's likely he was playing us."

Over Sabha's handsome face there was a smile playing like sunshine

on a trout-stream.

"I'm afraid your frien' was playin' ye," she said. "I think Miss McGonnigle just the other end of no great things."

"Ha! ha!" I said, winking at Tom. "Envie verte! La femme est la même partout."

"Greek again?" said Sabha, laughing uproariously.

"Excuse me! I was swearing to Tom that the minx needn't expect me to kiss her, for I'm hanged if I do it!"

Sabha relapsed into fits of laughter, in which the old woman joined.

"Well, I'm blessed," Tom said, "if she makes any of her love to me! if she tries it, I'll—I'll—show Miss Mac Noise-in-the-throat a clean pair of heels. That's what I'll do."

Sabha did enjoy the light in which we treated the absent young lady. And both Tom and I saw that we had thereby thoroughly ingratiated ourselves in the queenly Sabha's favor.

"Now, Tom, we have settled that we are to frown down all approaches from this Miss MacFright, there is nothing to attract us to the Padre's unless his larder. What sort of larder does he keep, Sabha?"

"What's that?"

"Before we commit ourselves to wasting a day on the old man, we would like to get an inventory of both cupboard and cellar."

"We want to know what prog and grog he can stow our hold with," Tom cut in, "if we do him the honor of a call."

"What he can toss us to eat and drink," said I.

"Oh!" said Sabha. "Oh, you'll not want for eatin' an' drinkin' of the best if you call on Father Dan."

"Then, be it resolved," said Tom, "that this body of—of—free and independent Cockney tourists do Father Dan MacSomething-barbarous the pleasure of consenting to feed with him to-morrow."

"Carried nem. con.," I said. "And, furthermore, be it resolved, that this meeting of free-born Britons, who never will be slaves, collectively and individually agree that while we shall unhesitatingly condescend to avail ourselves of the run of his larder and cellar, we shall do all that in us lies to discourage and check the advances of Miss MacGorgon."

"I unanimously support that," Tom said. "When shall we wait upon the Padre to convey to him the substance of our resolutions?"

"I move that we take the hills for it in the morning, and drop in on him hungry and thirsty at three or four o'clock in the afternoon."

"By Jehosaphat!" Tom said, "not if I know it. We tried that dodge with our quondam friend at Meencarriga, and you know how it worked—profuse welcome, grand review, and march past of his household—album of faded everybodies. Walk up the hill to make an appetite for tea (an appetite! oh, curse him!). Smoky tea, bread of a remote geological period, and butter—dismissal, and 'Hope to see you soon again!' No, no, no! no more of that game for me. The Padre would have dined before three or four. We'll call on him to-morrow morning between nine and ten—' just dropped in, as our mutual friend Hartley had warned us not to come back to London without giving him a call,' you know. We were just on our way to the hills for a few hours' ramble; if absolutely necessary, throw in something about how appetizing the air on these hills of his are. He can't get out of it. We must have a bottle of wine then and there in honor of Hartley. And we must drop

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in to have a bite of dinner with him coming back. He'll be sorry he hasn't any great variety to offer us. We comfort him on that score—anything will do us—a roast turkey, partridge, snipe, and any such trifles will go well with a couple of bottles of old wine—recognized brand of course—and so forth, and so forth. As easy as kiss your hand, the whole business."

" And the niece?" said Sabha.

"Yes, Sabha, Tom forgets to stipulate that the old Padre must pass his word of honor on no account to permit the niece to make love to us."

"The niece," said Tom, "shall be put under a rule of bail to observe the peace towards all her Majesty's good-looking subjects—of the male persuasion—whilst we remain."

"And I'll hear from you on the next day, how ye have got along with her."

"My angel," said I, shaking hands with both our hostesses, "you shall hear from us on the next day how we did not get along with her. By-bye, darling!"

"If Miss MacRattle-in-my-throat was a goddess instead of a Gorgon," Tom said as he gave them a parting grasp, "I'd have no eyes for her after this delightful interview."

"Oh, you English rogues!" Sabha called after us. "We Irish mountain girls are too, too simple for you."

Tom and I kissed our hands to her.

We were very favorably impressed with Father Dan. We saw at once he was the hearty, merry, good-natured fellow Hartley had promised.

"Failte! Failte! Cead mile failte! As strangers you're welcome. As friends of my friend, doubly so. The hills? Oh, bother you an' the hills! That hill above the door there is the highest an' the farthest ye'll go this day, I give ye my word for it. Here, now, the softest seats ye can choose—the softer the better, for like Willy-the-Wisp an' the devil, ye'll not rise out of them till I see fit to give ye leave; and I'll take my time about that. Sabha! Sabha! I've got a little hussy of a niece here. Hurry yourself, there, Sabha! Your curls will pass muster very well as they are! A hussy of a niece home from French convent, and if anything in the shape of a man comes about the house she'll not appear till she's got the bottom of the trunk on her. Not but she's hoyden enough the rest of the time, not pleased if she isn't scouring the neighborhood in striped petticoat and bare feet. Oh, here we are, are we? And dressed to kill! Oh, you—vou—woman!"

"Ah, old Padre! ne savez vous pas que la femme est la même partout!"

Tom told me afterwards that only because he saw he would have to trample over the bodies of both of them—for they occupied the room-door—he'd have made a clean burst for freedom. I glanced at the window myself, but I know I hadn't energy enough even to fall through it. And the minx was rippling over with laughter!

"My dear Sabha, here are two gentlemen-What! What!"

For Sabha, unheeding the introduction, had smilingly advanced, looking a veritable little queen, and dropped us each a courtesy that made both Tom and me quake where we sat. We did still sit. I confess it, we were unable to rise.

"Gentlemen," and she was laughing gayly as she extended her hand, "I am so happy! I give you a cead mile failte."

I think we did take her hand; though Tom still argues that along with the mystery of the Man in the Iron Mask that point will go down to posterity as an unsettled problem. He says I am incapable of giving an opinion, as I was too dazed to know whether I was myself or Tom Hawe. I argue that, whatever chance I had of recollecting what we did or what we said, his chance was more slender still.

"Oh, yes, Father Dan, I had the pleasure of treating both gentlemen to a nice bowl of milk in the Widow's last evening, and likewise the pleasure of a long and very entertaining talk with them—you remember, gentlemen—on art, literature, and language, and Miss Cleopatra the Queen of the Cannibal Islands—and other equally interesting matters."

"The girl's worse to-day than usual." Father Dan was staring at her in amused wonder, while she, never heeding, seated herself in a chair, and laughed again and again a ringing laugh, that rang in our ears with the cheerfulness of a death-knell. "What are you blatherin' about, anyhow? Miss Cleopatra the Queen of the Cannibal Islands!"

"Father Dan," she said, "it's Greek—to you. Gentlemen, what say you to a little prog and a little grog? Father Dan, the key of your cellar, please?"

Ere an hour's time, though, not only did Sabha make Father Dan shake his sides with laughter, but she had Tom and myself roaring in chorus.

THE STRANGE CONFIDANT

BY EDITH M. THOMAS

HID my sorrow from the friend most dear,
And with a smile shut down the springing tear:
As to a priest of God, a cure of souls,
I told it freely in a stranger's ear.

THE COLLEGE GIRL AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

BY SOPHIA KIRK

HE higher education of women is an established fact, on which even fashion has consented to set its seal, and vet we still hear it discussed on all sides as an experiment. The college girl, though golf and tennis have brought her nearer than of yore to her generation in society, and the sense of her being harder to talk to than other girls is wearing off, is still regarded curiously and a little askance. There is a certain myth afloat in regard to her nature and existence. She is subjected to three processes which in the eyes of the world at large are occult and mysterious, separating her from her kind, fraught with possibilities and dangers: she passes through a terrible ordeal known as the entrance examination; she plunges into the abyss of intellectual work; she is surrounded by the strange enchantments of college life. Will her health, her spontaneity and jov, be forever ruined by the first? Will the second engulf forever her womanliness, her charm, her religious faith? Will she be unfitted by the third for home life, for social life, for the best of human life? These questions may sound portentous and exaggerated, but they are all floating in the air, sometimes without the interrogation-point, in the form of criticism.

Is the college, then, such a contradiction to our American life and ideas? Is a little learning such a dangerous thing that it is not safe to try the experiment of a little more? Is the natural pleasure of our young girls in the companionship of their own age and sex becoming so great as to unfit them for intercourse with their elders or with the other sex? There are two sources from which to obtain answers to these questions-statistics and observation. The former is already within the reach of inquirers in set form, and will not be employed here: its judgments are unerring but slow, historical rather than contemporary. The statistics, which now point to fewer marriages among college graduates, may in a few years be seen to indicate rather later marriages. Observation is a test the results of which must be sifted, compared, and taken for what they are worth. Nobody can do more than contribute something towards it; and these few notes, made from a residence of eight years in an unacademic position in one of our women's colleges, form a subscription of a mere mite.

Much of the criticism of the college comes, of course, from our material standard, but much more seems to have its origin in a certain eager intellectual activity demanding at every moment result and achievement, impatient of processes and of growth. That a girl or boy following the routine of study prescribed for examination should have to

work hard on subjects which may not be entertaining or immediately rewarding, to the neglect of others no less deserving of human interest, is intolerable to persons of this temperament. An instance of this is found in an attack on entrance examinations in a recent periodical, in which the tale is told of a boy who, having been educated at home beyond the college requirements, was vet obliged, in order to matriculate. to spend an entire year in review of that elementary knowledge which he had forgotten in his progress to higher things, with the result that during the cram those loftier studies imbibed in the previous year "became dim in the memory." The case is sad, though not, we should have supposed, past hope But the subsequent college career of that boy bids us leave hope behind and look for salvation only to the unexpected. By special intervention of those higher powers in American education, the parents, he was allowed, one is not told by what concessions on the part of the college authorities, to enter the class in Greek and put off the examination in that subject for a few weeks. This enabled him to carry off a prize in that branch of study, while all the time his real genius lay in the line, not of Greek, but of mathematics. "But, daunted by the prospect of two searching examinations in geometry, he has spent two years in reviewing what he least needs to review."

It is hardly worth while to offer either criticism or consolation in a case like this, to suggest that the requirements in mathematics of a college entrance examination can be met by a year's study on the part of an ordinarily bright pupil, that there are condition examinations in which the mistakes of entrance can be rectified, or that even in a college a student is not quite so hidden under a bushel as to preclude any recognition of the real nature of his abilities. Wrongs of this category will not be righted until parents can present their children to the university as freely as the Spartans presented theirs to the state.

An objection made again and again to entrance examinations is that the requirements are so difficult and engrossing that the pupil in the secondary school has no chance to read or to get any idea of literature outside the books prescribed. This objection to the preparation of the ordinary freshman is made by the college as well. The head of one of the colleges with the most severe entrance standard, Miss M. Carey Thomas, president of Bryn Mawr, in an address given last spring before the women's law class of the New York University, speaks of the students "who are handed over to us from the schools in swaddling clothes" who "have remained apparently unaffected by the splendors of Homer and Virgil and Goethe," and "have read a few great English masterpieces unwillingly, it would seem." Is the examination standard to blame for this state of things, or the secondary schools? Or is it a difficulty against which the schools and the col-

lege together contend, and which their united efforts can hope only

gradually and partially to overcome?

The love of reading is generally of early growth. It is in the natural bent of the boy or girl, or in the atmosphere about them, which they imbibe without knowing it. The majority of persons who read from an inward impulse to do so, and to whom the printed page is a living reality, cannot remember the time when this was not the case with them. The present fashion of teaching children to read as late as possible tends a little to make reading a conscious effort, and the multiplication of interests and pleasures which take the place of reading leads with young and old to a weakening of the effect of the masterpieces of literature.

This early habit of the printed page, which is like the faculty of carrying a tune, not presupposing an entire knowledge of music, is lacking in a large number of the pupils who enter our schools and colleges. The schools and colleges must do all that they can to make up for this lack. But if they devoted themselves as a final end to cultivating literary appreciation they would defeat their own purpose. This natural love of reading is an awakening of the imagination, and the object of education is not alone to stimulate the imagination, but to control and direct it. The period of growth which is covered by the school years is the time when the memory must be strengthened and habits of mental industry formed. Where the imagination is keen there is the more need of material for it, not to brood over, but to work on.

Now college requirements afford just this material for preparatory schools. It is the experience of many teachers who have abandoned their former methods to conform to the exigencies of the matriculation standard that the girls have ceased to be driven, and are working voluntarily with an object in view. The marking system, which supplied a fictitious stimulus, is replaced by a stimulus as exacting but real. Competition is still rife, but it is not the empty question of who goes farthest: there is a definite goal to be reached by each one.

This working together for ends that are clearly marked out and felt to be worth while, this possession of an interest which is not a mere amusement, but has the stimulus of difficulty as well, is the benefit and delight of college. What is now to be aimed at is the cultivation of the reasoning powers, the formation of habits of mental coördination and judgment. Study is no longer mere memorizing, but an exercise in selection, grouping, searching for related facts in a mass of unsifted material. Those who would minimize the study of the classics in our colleges in favor of courses having a more direct bearing on the future occupation and surroundings of the student would do away with one of the most important factors in intellectual develop-

ment—the assimilation of ideas as remote as possible from one's own. To get true mental perspective mental distances are necessary. The nearer literature or history may take a stronger hold on the affections, but the distant one has made the mind a traveller. It gives to the student ideals of literary taste bent to the service of research. Even in the closest philological work are to be found these remote affinities which stir the imagination, "the flowering of the dry-as-dust," as Professor Gildersleeve happily calls them. And in science it is needless to point out how relations shift and the mind is kept alert for discovery and new combinations.

Something of this general sense of proportion and perspective, with a definite store of knowledge along one or two lines, is what each student ought to gain from the college course. She need not be eccentric in order to acquire it; if she is working seriously, it is shoulder to shoulder with other workers; if she is apprehending some of it only in a girlish and half-unconscious fashion, so are a host of her companions. There is nothing in this little intellectual outfit to injure her womanliness, if it be once granted that a woman may be allowed to reason beyond the limits of the proverbial "woman's reason." There is much to strengthen character, if character must seek for strength in something beyond mere impulse and feeling. And if, in this emphasizing of reason and awakening of the perception of relativity, there is any menace to her religious faith, is it not one which would come to her from many sources, for the questions raised even in a philosophical course could hardly go beyond those propounded in a modern novel, and to which right thinking and purpose in living will help to bring the solution? as a rule the college student regards work as something to be actively done, not speculated on. What she gains or loses in character and thought is not all down in her course book; part of it comes from, and in turn leaves its impress on, that composite organism called college

As a girl on entering college exchanges text-books for lecture-notes, studying under rules to working for herself under direction, so she gives up the restrictions of boarding-school or her place in the family for a life in which, with tasks to perform, she is free to get through them in her own way, to arrange her hours, form her associates, choose her recreation, and either plan for herself or live without a plan. She may shut herself within the four walls of her room and lead the life of a solitary "dig;" she may establish herself with her bosom friend in a tiny suite of three rooms and lead a cosey little life à deux, giving afternoon tea to a few visitors, and living almost as in an apartment house, though without separate meals. She may belong to a clique, and have her room always open to a large circle of congenial spirits. Or she may throw herself into the interests of the college and of the

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student body as a whole, know everybody, take an active part in the life about her, and be a power in the college world.

It is to the credit and the benefit of the students that, as a rule, no one of these plans is exclusively followed. Girls of varied individualities, of widely divergent antecedents and training, come to college and live in close proximity; there are occasional disagreements and probably some rancors and heart-burns, but on the whole the adjustment of relations is admirable, due partly to the common interest and duty, partly to the laws of mental gravitation, but also in great part to a prevailing tone of good-sense and kindliness. There are cranks in college; there are students who turn their intelligence into channels of wilfulness, egotism, and caprice; but they are in a very small minority as compared with the capricious of their sex in the world at large, and by far the greater number develop in good-sense, responsibility, and earnestness: yes, in earnestness, although it cannot be denied that its common bane, cynicism, is a plant which easily takes root in the college soil. A certain superficial mockery is a common trait among Americans; it exists even in children. Conversation is more or less a match at this game. To clever young people, apt, like Gwendolen, to dislike what they don't like more than they like what they like, enamored of finish, impatient of the ineffectual, this attitude of mind offers for a time peculiar attractions. It is often a protest against false emotionalism, and so far salutary, at least in its origin. But not only is cynicism not the prevailing tone in college, it is one which, however sedulously fostered, must have difficulty in maintaining itself permanently against certain forces of college life,-against the general wholesomeness and blitheness of spirit, the readiness with which respect is accorded by all in the student body to solid qualities of scholarship, however unaccompanied by grace or fashion, the singleness with which a whole mass of students of divergent ideas will unite on some crucial question of right and wrong. In college there is, too, a powerful dissolvent of cynicism in the larger seriousness and steadfastness of purpose fostered by regular intellectual work.

It is the work that welds together all the heterogeneous elements in college and makes the freedom of its students a responsible one; for sooner or later, from the love of study, from ambition, from the fear of failure, or from whatever other motive, the greater number of students become workers, and the society girl who is at college only for a year takes her place beside the intending teacher or the patient drudge. This ardor for work tends to consumption of the midnight oil, especially towards examination time; but experience, with now and then a condition attached, is in the long-run a successful teacher. The nightly kerosene is burned largely by the freshmen, a lamp before the statue of liberty.

The ignorance of the laws of health with which many girls arrive at college almost equals their ignorance of literature. They work out their own salvation in this respect, as in other matters, and sometimes suffer in the process. But as a rule the health of the girls improves in college. They generally gain in weight, the regular life is a benefit, and the freedom accorded to the student allows of an adjustment of hours to the individual which gives less strain than the more iron rules of school. And in spite of the fact that college has a peculiar attraction for girls whose nervous temperament or delicate organization is ill fitted to cope with its conditions, the health even of these girls often compares not unfavorably with that of the maidens similarly organized who go into society or stay inertly at home. Hysterical tendencies are often conquered in college, occupation and responsibility and intelligent comprehension of the effort to be made proving a great help.

The health of the larger organism, college life, needs readjustment from time to time. It also has its nerves, its defects of circulation, a touch of fever now and then. It needs air and good-sense; fortunately these remedies are not far to seek. When things have gone too far in one direction there is an effort made to strike a balance; they are not left inertly to the effects of reaction. The power of the students to reason as a body is a good testimony to the training of the

individuals.

Criticisms of college life abound within the academic walls as well as without, and, curiously enough, the two have a marked similarity of tone. The monotony of the life, its aloofness from the main currents and interests of the world, its lack of the masculine element, its opportunities for selfishness and exclusion, the demands made by the degree, forbidding excursions into by-paths of literature, the ruts of thought and the eternal college topics in conversation, these are the main counts of the indictment. Always the same comparison with the outside world; the enumeration of useful arts of which the college girl is ignorant, the question as to the practical value of the things she learns, and, on the part of the student herself, doubts as to whether it is worth while or scruples about not doing more good to her fellowbeings. One would think, to listen to these comments, that a college girl entered the academic cloister for life, that the black-gowned processions were composed year by year of the same figures, the stream made up of the same drops of water. One would think that no future lay in store for the graduate in which to redeem a few of her deficiencies, add a little to her experiences, and do some good in the world. But has not the college girl had a pre-existence, Platonic or not, and is she not, Deo volente, to go on existing? Are there not holidays—a whole summer, a Christmas and a spring vacation—in which she may dance and do observance to the world? Are not the objects for which

she goes to college worth the temporary sacrifice of a few other interests?

Behind our impatience and desire to do everything at once lies a scepticism as to the worth of the intellect. Our universities suffer from the democratic distrust of culture; they do not yet belong to the people as does our public-school system, as, with the increase of the desire for knowledge, they must ultimately. Our women's colleges, appealing to the same class, and of course largely to women, encounter here and there another distrust, that of certain cultivated minds to regular training, to anything that savors of intellectual mechanism. But surely we need both more culture, and more training to give it direction and purpose. We need minds trained to be organs of intelligence, having the patience to gather material and the power to use it, able to rise above dilettanteism. We need in every department of life more comprehension and adaptability. It will take many college generations of four years each to have the effect of this training widely felt as a benefit and power in the country, but it is an end for the attainment of which the setting apart by the individual of a few of the best years of life to study and intellectual work does not seem too large a price.

THE MISERY IN MIS' RANDOLPH'S KNEE

BY ROBERT SHACKLETON

LARGE and very black woman, with a face creased into so many valleys and ridges that it looked like a map in relief of a round island of very uneven surface, was glaring with defiance at a man who sat across from her in the Lexington Avenue car that I had just taken at Thirtieth Street. I recognized the man at once as one of the foremost surgeons of the city, and I noticed that he was ill at ease and embarrassed under the snappy glare and the tilting tosses of anger. That the woman was evidently respectable and not intoxicated was what made it, doubtless, impossible for the man to entirely ignore her manifestations.

I recognized the woman too. She was "Mis' Randolph," a laundress whom I had known for over a year as a faithful and hard-working woman. She was a widow, her husband, a shiftless fellow, whom she had worshipped and labored for, having died shortly after she began doing my weekly work. She had not mourned him long, in spite of her erstwhile worship, and the "misery in her knee" was all that made a black spot, so to speak, in her existence.

This "misery" gave her a pronounced limp, and at times, especially when a change of weather impended, caused her acute suffering.

"It's going to be falling weathah, shu'," she would declare. "My bayrummetah says so, and so it will sholy be."

Whenever I suggested that a doctor might be of benefit she shook her head with mournful decision, saying that no doctor could help her any more than they had, as she had tried them and knew. Once I remarked that hospital treatment might cure her, but she exclaimed, with a sudden fright that surprised me:

"No, suh! No, suh! No doctah an' no sawjun's going to saw Mis' Randolph's knee!"

She delighted in giving herself the full designation of "Mis' Randolph," and was keenly pleased when others did the same, instead of calling her by her plain first name.

"I'm Virginiah fine folks! Harry and me ain't no common colo'd pussons! Our folks was all Randolphs—big white folks—and they owned houses as big as the City Hall, and their land it went for miles and miles, and they had lots and lots o' common colo'd pussons to work for them, and fine folks like me and Harry to take keer of the inside of the house!"

But Mrs. Randolph in the street-car was a different person from Mrs. Randolph as I had ever before known her. Her wonted goodhumor had all vanished, and she was the personification of threatening wrath. More surprising still, her lameness had entirely departed! At Twenty-fourth Street she signalled to the conductor with great dignity to stop the car, stood very stiffly erect for a moment, glaring down at the surgeon, gave a final tilt and toss of defiance, and then stalked majestically from the car without the slightest limp. She was far too occupied with the surgeon to recognize me or to glance at any of the amused passengers. At the door she gave a backward look, a victorious sniff, and, stepping from the platform, marched stiffly away, still without a sign of lameness, and darting Parthian glances over her shoulder with the same look of triumph.

On the following Thursday she came to my rooms, as usual, and I noticed that there was a full return of her customary limp. In fact, she moaned and complained about the "misery" even more than usual, and said that a big storm must certainly be at hand or else that she had somehow hurt her knee.

"And you must feel it the more keenly through its coming back after you had just gotten entirely rid of the lameness," I said.

She looked at me with inquiring wonder. "Got rid of it, suh! No. The misery hain't left me nohow, and won't never leave me till Mis' Randolph is daid."

"But in the street-car, on last Sunday, I noticed that you did not limp at all," I responded.

"Was you in that kah, suh?" she cried. And then she chuckled

gleefully. "'Deed my misery hain't left me, and it was just force o' charactah that made me do that. It hurt me, and the misery is hurting me to-day just from what I did. But I was bound not to let that Hessian see me limp. Did you see him, just sitting across from me in that kah? I made him feel discomfortable, too, with looking at him so scornful! I'm a Randolph of Virginiah, and it comes natural to look scornful at a Hessian. And I wouldn't let him see me limp! No, suh! That Hessian!"

Whenever Mrs. Randolph wished to express the very extreme of contempt or dislike towards anybody she was wont to call him a "Hessian." She could give no explanation of the word except that it had been a common term of opprobrium in Virginia, and that she had learned it, when a child, as a natural and common word. It interested me, as being, apparently, a transmitted survival of the Revolutionary hatred of the Hessian soldiery.

"That Hessian see me limp! I wouldn't let him, nohow! That Hessian he once tried to cut off Mis' Randolph's laig!"

"Indeed! And how did you manage to escape having it done?"

"I escaped just through force o' charactah," she said, with dignity.

"I just walked to the boat, and I hadn't got no pass, but I just recommembered that I was a Randolph of Virginiah, and I got away from the Island all right. It was just force o' Randolph charactah."

The reference to the Island and the pass told me that there was just one place where the adventure had occurred. "You never told me before that you were on Blackwell's Island," I said.

A look of deepest chagrin came over her face, and the ridges dolorously unfolded, lengthening the customary round island until it seemed like a map of Africa.

"That's what comes of talking free. Seems as if when my fool mouth opens the words run out just like wattah a-running from a faucet. Yes, suh. I was on the Island two years ago; but o' course I never told you, for I was feared you would think Mis' Randolph'd been and done somefin'. And now my fool tongue's been and told it. But it wasn't for any wrong, nohow!"

I reassured Mrs. Randolph by saying that I was well aware that there were not less than from six to eight thousands of people on the Island, and that they were scattered among quite a number of institutions, including two large hospitals, and that, therefore, in spite of the fact that, in popular parlance, the words "the Island" were understood to mean the workhouse, she need not have been afraid that I should think that Blackwell's contained nothing but the workhouse and the hospital wards connected with that correctional institution.

"I presume that you were a patient at either the Metropolitan or the City Hospital," I said. "Yes. That was just it. I was at the City Hospital," she replied, with a sigh of relief, as the creases drew back into their natural ridges.

"The misery in my knee was bad,—very bad,—and I had to give up my work; and Harry,—he was my husband, you know,—he was just earning a little, and the Doctah, he told me to go to the hospital. He say, 'Mis' Randolph, you just go.' And I say, 'Huccome I go to the hospital, Doctah, when you've done took all the money I had? Yes, all the money I had I has paid to you.' And with that he laugh and he laugh, and then he say, 'Well then, I must get you in the hospital without paying nothing.' And he laugh again and say, 'Sholy, Mis' Randolph, I must get you in the hospital plumb free. And I'll tell 'em you're real lame, and they'll send an amb'lance for you.'

"And I tells all the neighbors what come in to see me, including Mis' Brown, who was just a common colo'd pusson, spite of her giving herself airs because her husband work as assistant to the janitor of one of them big new twenty-story buildings down town, and I says to Mis' Brown and all the other neighbors that I was going to have the amb'lance come to the street for me special, and that the great city of New York was a-going to try to cure the misery in this knee.

"And so, one day, there come a-ringing and a-clanging in the street,—it was Thompson Street where I lived then, suh,—and the amb'lance drove right up to the door of the tenement, and there was a big excitement. Seemed as if the street was all alive with fine colo'd folks and common colo'd pussons like Mis' Brown, and at every window there was haids a-sticking out.

"And I feels real proud. I has Harry take me down to the amb'lance, a-leading and a-supporting me, and me just a-moaning and a-groaning about the misery in my knee, and all the rest they so envious and so jealous that they almost ready to kill me! Oh, it was a grand day for Mis' Randolph! And I bows to all I can see, real consedending like, and I says to Mis' Brown, with a toss of my haid, 'You didn't believe me when I said I was a-goin' to be sent for special with the amb'lance and drove away to the hospital, but you just see that they thinks a good deal of Mis' Randolph. I ain't no common no-'count colo'd pusson, Mis' Brown.'

"And she know what I mean, and she look at me with her face twisted as if she had green persimmons in her mouth, and then she say, just as thin and mean as sour plum-juice, 'But you won't come back a-driving, lessen in a daid-wagon.' And then she snicker right out.

"And I says, just like a Virginiah Randolph ought to talk to common folks, 'Deed, Mis' Brown, I'll come back a-riding just as grand as I goes away!'

"But the good Lahd knows just why I said that same. It come out of my mouth before I stopped to think. Just like the faucet, as I said befo'. But I wasn't going to take it back, for I always speak real big to that jealous Mis' Brown, and then I was drove away all grand and dignifidy, and everybody they laugh at Mis' Brown and everybody they think that Mis' Randolph is big folks shu'.

"Oh, that was a grand day, suh, a grand day! 'Tain't often that the good Lahd He gives even Virginiah fine folks such a day as that! But they was a better day a-comin'. Yes; they was a better and a

grander day a-comin'.

"Well, they took me across on a big steamah, and to the hospital, and there the big doctahs they all come and they look and they look at my knee, and they all try to cure the misery in it. They wraps it, and they puts poultices and liniments on it, and they ties it, and they unties it, and they twists it round and round like as if 'twas nothing but a brake on a street-kah. Then they shakes their haids all solemn like, and after trying for a good many days they says, 'We must wait and show this to the big sawjun.'

"And I asks the nurse who is the big sawjun who is to look at Mis' Randolph's laig, and she say, flip like, 'He's the sawjun that saws people's laigs clean off.' And I say, 'Fo the Lahd, I hopes that sawjun won't look at Mis' Randolph's knee. The misery's bad, but it would be

wusser to have no knee to have the misery in.'

"In a few days I hears one of the doctahs say to the nurse that the big sawjun wus a-coming into the ward. And in a few minutes in he come, all grand like, and they take him right over to Mis' Randolph's baid as if there ain't nobody in the hospital so important as me.

"And he was the same Hessian that was in the kah, suh! The very same big Hessian! And he have me carried to a room where they was bottles and things all 'round, and where they lays me out on a big flat piece of glass, and there he twists and turns my laig, and shakes his haid real solemn, like the preacher do when he prays for the sinner that he knows the Lahd won't save. And he say, 'The misery in Mis' Randolph's knee am very bad.' But he look just so foolish solemn as a owel. Then he say, 'Very curious case. Must look into this myself.' Then he stand with two doctahs at the side of the room, and the three they jerk their heads and nod just like three fat Virginiah buzzahds a-waitin' for somefin' to die.

"Of course, I feels real proud that the misery in my knee is so important to the big men, and I didn't know the sawjun was a Hessian till after I was carried back to my own baid. But while I lies there, I hears him tell the nurse, 'Yes. At ten to-morrow morning.' And they both look at Mis' Randolph, and it all come to me plain as if I had heard every word.

"I don't say anything right away, for first I waits and makes a plan, thinking it all out careful. And 'long 'bout three o'clock I speaks to the nurse as she comes near me, and I say, 'Oh, this misery am real bad! I can't stand it much longer!' And I groans and kicks up like. And I say, 'Is it ten o'clock in the morning that the big sawjun is a-coming to saw it off?' And she say, 'Yes.' And then she ask, quick like, 'Huccome you know that?' But I just groan and say, 'Oh, how this misery hurts me!'

"Pretty soon she go away, and I have my plan all fixed. I knows I can't afford to have my laig cut off, for then I couldn't work for Harry no more when they sends me home. And I didn't want it off nohow. Do me a heap sight more good on. Well, my clothes they hang in a closet at the end of the room, and when the nurse goes away, before five, as I knowed she did every afternoon, for 'bout half an hour, to meet a clerk from the office, I gets up and goes to the closet and gets the clothes. Some of the other women they look at me, lazy like, and wondering, but they don't say nothing. I goes quick, though the misery hurts me real bad, and then I goes out into the hall, and down the last stair on the side to'wa'ds where the boat lands. Not the big steamah that took me there, but a little one that goes straight across the river every hour. I had seen it from the window, and watched it pretty nigh every day, having little to do there, you know, suh, and I knowed all about it from others in the ward.

"I didn't know just how I could do it, for I knowed I ought to have a pass, but I just recommembered that I was a Randolph of Virginiah and that I mustn't disgrace the family by being beat. And I also recommembered my laig and the Hessian. So I slipped out of the end door, and went down to the boat real stately, and there was a line of people, each with a ticket in his hand, just as if 'twas the theatre.

"And all at once I wanted to shout 'Hallelujah!' for I saw the captain of the boat, and I knowed him, for I had washed and ironed for him and his wife before the misery made me give up work. And so I held my haid high and didn't look at the man that stood by the plank the people walked on. I just looked over his haid, and I nodded to the captain, and I says, 'Howdy,' and then I steps over the side of the boat to'a'ds where the captain stood, and I nod and speak to him while the man say, 'Pass, your pass!' And I pretends not to hear the man, but speaks right up to the captain, very grand, recommembering I was a Randolph, and I says that I would like to have his work again to do, as I have been cured and sent away from the hospital. And he say that he is real glad to hear it, and the man taking up passes sees that the captain knows me for shu', and so kept on busy with the folks that come after me.

"I was afraid to let the captain see that my laig still hurt, for he might have said, 'Mis' Randolph, you're not cured, and must go right back.' And I was afraid that they would come a-running and a-chasing

after me from the hospital. But no one come, and the boat it took me over. I got a nickel from the captain to ride down town, and I took the Second Avenue trolley, and I got off at Bleecker Street and the Bowery.

"But the misery in my knee was so much worse, from all I had made the knee do, that it seemed as if I couldn't walk a step nohow. I leaned against a big packing-box and wondered how I was ever going to get to Thompson Street. And when the hurt got worse, and I recommembered Mis' Brown, and how aggravating she would be, I almost asked a policeman to send me back to the Island. But I thought of that Hessian and my laig, and I felt too mad.

"I prayed and prayed more than I ever did at church, and then the help it come. It was after six o'clock, and there was only people a-hurrying home, and along came a wagon—a covered wagon, shaped like a hearsc—with bells and looking-glasses ringing and shining, and with plumes on the horses and on the wagon too. It looked some like a band-wagon, but more like a daid-wagon, except for the ringing bells. And the driver was Ben Johnson; I knowed him, for he was near kin.

"And I stepped out into the street and I said, 'Ben Johnson, you just stop.' And he stopped quick, right surprised. And I said, 'Ben, you must drive me home. The miserv in my knee's so bad I can't walk.' And he said, 'I'm real sorry, but 'deed I can't. I'm taking this wagon to the stables, and they'd discharge me. This wagon belongs to the big flower store, and I'm the regular driver,' he said, real big. It's surprising, suh, how stuck up some colo'd pussons gets 'bout themselves. I always used to say to Harry, 'We musn't forget, Harry, we are Randolphs of Virginiah, but we mustn't let ourselves ever get stuck up.'

"Well, I looks Ben Johnson square in the eye, and I say, 'Ben Johnson, you are close kin of mine, for you are second cousin to my aunt 'Liza. And you are a-courting of Miss Jen, and I knows her well, and I knows as well as you that she's got money in the bank. And if you don't take me I'll tell Miss Jen just how mean a man Ben Johnson is.' He look at me real sober, at that, and so I speak to him again, very dignifidy. 'Ben Johnson, I know you don't d'lib'retly do mean things, and so you're going to drive me home. And if you don't want me on the seat I can just climb inside.'

"At that he laughed right out, and said that he couldn't let that be done on the open street. But you may recommember, suh, that there's a alley there, twisting back out of sight, and so I told him to drive right in there. And he did. Then he opens the back door quick, and in I crawls, and he jumps back again to the seat and drives away, while I hears some low-down man a-laughing fit to kill. And the inside of that wagon was as full of the smell of flowers as a Virginiah hillside in the spring-time.

"Through a crack at the front I told Ben to drive real slow on Thompson Street, for I wanted to surprise Mis' Brown. And I found another little hole, where I could look through, and when we drove so slow down Thompson Street the people they all looked out of the windows and stood around the stoops, wondering about the grand wagon, and if it was really going to stop somewhere. And Ben, he sit and drive just so solemn as a undertakah.

"And Mis' Brown, I see her come out, and I hear her say, 'What's this? what's this?' as the wagon stop right in front of the house where Harry and me lived and Mis' Brown too. And Ben Johnson he say, real mou'nful, 'It's Mis' Randolph, and I've brung her back again. Won't some one go up and tell her husband to come?'

"And Mis' Brown she grin real aggravating, showing all her teef, and she cry out to Mis' Minetty, 'I told Mis' Randolph she could only come back a-riding in the daid-wagon, and in the daid-wagon she have come!'

"And that made me mad, and from the inside of the wagon I call back to her, 'Just wait a minute, and I'll come out and show Mis' Brown who's daid! And my voice must have sounded dreadful hollow, for Mis' Brown she just screech and screech, and before she could run away the door of that wagon swung open with me a-pressing on it, and out my feet went and hung there a-wiggling, and Mis' Brown she just let out another screech and then flopped down in her-stericks.

"Oh, it was a grand day, suh! a grand, grand day! Never was such a triumph happen on Thompson Street! And all the people they thought Mis' Randolph the triumphantest pusson in the whole big city. It was sholy a grand day!

"And the misery in my knee wa'n't never so bad after that neither. Seems like as if the doctahs on the Island must have helped it pretty consid'ble after all, with their twistings and linimentings. It's still a bayrummetah for the weathah, and it often discomfortably hurts, but 'tain't nigh so bad at 'twas.

"But, oh! the glory of the ride in the amb'lance! And oh! the bigger triumph of the return that gave Mis' Brown her-steriks! And do you think Mis' Randolph would have let that Hessian see her limp, aftah he wanted to saw her laig clean off! That Hessian!"

AT FLOOD

BY CLINTON SCOLLARD

L IFE'S at the flood of Summertide, and now Joy sings with Love upon the lyric bough.

BIRDS OF PASSAGE

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL

Author of " Nests and Eggs of American Birds"

OTHING is more characteristic of our seasons, and nothing more interesting in ornithology, than the migratory flights of the birds. We welcome them when they come north in the spring in tuneful companies as the most pleasing feature of a reviving world, this familiar acquaintance and that saluting us with well-remembered greetings. Many speedily disappear, to be sure, but most of them remain, to gladden our hearts and senses while we watch them cunningly contrive their homes and lovingly rear their young in our gardens and groves. Then, in the restful, meditative days of autumn, the story is reversed. Birds that we caught a glimpse of in spring grant us a second brief interview, our summer friends are assembling and departing, and presently only the faithful few who reside with us the year around, plus some winter visitors from boreal parts, will be seen in our woods and meadows.

It appears then that we in temperate latitudes entertain two sets of annual visitors,—one from the South and the other from the North. This is true, and it looks as though the custom of migration had begun among birds—wanderers by nature—by their annually leaving the overcrowded tropics for increasingly distant journeys in the course of which they built their nests; and that after a while certain ones had got into the habit of staying in the new regions or of making only short and partial migrations which by and by will cease. It is significant that most of the pronounced migratory species are errant members of families mainly tropical.

As a matter of fact, the extent of migration now varies from the longest possible distance to none at all, and from actuating a whole species to moving only a part of its individuals. In point of numbers, taking the whole world together, long-distance migrants are decidedly in minority, and they belong almost wholly to the order of highest organization—the Oscines, or singing birds.

Observers in Central America and the West Indies, where most of our absent birds spend their winter, tell us that in March and early April they begin to find their voices and to gather in little bands which flit northward in an uncertain way until finally the movement grows steady.

Now, this is just the time when the tropical residents are mating and preparing to build their nests, so that whatever social force there may be in example is all towards influencing the restless emigrants to settle down where they are, but it has no effect. This is also the time, since the rainy season is at hand there, when vegetation springs into flower and fruit after the long drought, insect-eggs are hatching juicy grubs, and these changing into perfect insects by the million. Birdfood is therefore unusually varied and abundant, so that no fear of starvation forces the migrants into exile. Nevertheless, away they go, always arousing the advance country and beating up recruits, always choosing the easy seacoast routes or following great valleys, the same sorts of birds always in the lead, and other sorts uniformly at the rear.

The arrival of each species at any given northern point is remarkably regular in average seasons; but the migrations, as a whole, are influenced by the weather, the birds coming earlier in a forward than in a backward season. The actual travelling is done mainly at night. During the day when travelling our inland birds rest and flit about, moving onward by short flights, perhaps, but without haste, sleeping, feeding, and playing, until night comes, when you may see them rising into the air and moving with swift, steady strokes towards their goal. Hence a very dark and windy night impedes the advance of the general migration more than a gloomy day, and warm moonlit nights are followed by the greatest plenty of new arrivals; hence, also, the birds are prone to follow the lines of valleys, because these afford not only more shelter for the diurnal resting, but a larger amount of wayside food than bleak mountain tops or dry, open plains.

Professor W. W. Cooke has computed that the average advance in spring is twenty-three miles a day, but this is never maintained evenly, the delays caused by bad weather being made up by days (or nights) of far more rapid travel. Haste increases as the birds proceed, and even the smallest and shortest-winged are capable of extraordinary speed when impelled by the eagerness which seems to possess them at this sea-Warblers, fly-catchers, thrushes, and seed-eating birds, as well as water-fowl, annually pass from island to island of the West Indies and visit Bermuda and other places far from the American mainland. This implies not only a power of continuous locomotion for hundreds of miles, but also a very swift pace, since a bird cannot take enough food into its stomach to supply its system for more than a few hours, on account of the celerity with which its highly active organization uses up nutriment. A bird is like a high-pressure engine with small furnaces,—it must be constantly fed in order to keep up steam. The Mediterranean does not prevent a semi-annual transfer of feathered population between Europe and Africa; Great Britain's quota crosses both the English Channel and the North Sea; Japan and the Philippines are stocked from China and Australasia; while the remotest parts of the Pacific archipelago are visited by small migratory land-birds as well as wandering sea-fowl. Some European ornithologists assert that

certain tiny warblers habitually make their spring journey in a single night of unbroken flight from the African side of the Mediterranean to the shore of the Baltic.

But these persistent long-distance travellers are comparatively few, since most birds are able to satisfy themselves with homes well inside the Temperate Zone, and a pleasing feature connected with this (and possibly near the root of the origin of migration) is the fact that year after year, and probably generation after generation, birds return to the identical neighborhood in which they and their forefathers have been bred.

The sole business of a migratory bird's sojourn in the summer-land of its choice seems to be the rearing of a family. This accomplished, the thoughts of the birds seem to turn immediately to the south-to the warm, fruitful, indolent latitudes, where harsh winds and chilling rains and fading leaves never benumb bright spirits. Then conjugal ties break, fathers forsake mothers and offspring, and the latter follow as fast as strength permits. Thus again, as wave after wave sweeps down to us from Canada, as if on the wings of autumnal breezes, it is noticeable that old males are leading the hosts of each species, and that only later-sometimes much later-come females and young. I am careful to make this matter of the succession of ages clear, because of its notable significance in the problem: How do birds find their way? The old answer was short and easy: Instinct tells them. This means, if it means anything, that a bird is born with an intuitive knowledge of a road he has never seen, perhaps crossing an ocean. Moreover, migration routes are rarely straight lines north and south, to which the little creatures might be kept by some mysterious "sense of polar direction," but are usually somewhat roundabout, often crooked, and sometimes squarely east and west for a large part of the course.

To call it "instinct" is only an attempt to disguise ignorance, but for a long time those who did so asserted that in this and that case the young of the year were the first to arrive from the north, and by doing so, and proceeding on their way without hesitation, showed intuitive knowledge. One by one, however, the alleged instances have been shown untrue; and it is safe to say that no species of migratory bird is now known whose young habitually precede their parents either in the spring or the fall. Even if they occasionally did so, other birds are thronging in the same direction, and the innocents need only "go with the crowd" until they met some of their own race. There is, then, no more mystery as to the young: they are guided by their elders, or else they are lost.

But how do the elders find their way? A full answer to that question might take us back to the beginning of things, and then not be satisfactory; but we need not attempt so much. Let us say simply

that they have been taught the route and remember it. If you care to believe that long inheritance has given them a special aptness towards geography, I shall not object; and this may amount almost to a faculty in some cases, as those of sea-crossing species. Such cases are not readily explained; nor is the ability of the human natives of the South African veld or the American forests to strike a straight course to camp through an unmarked wilderness. Nevertheless, I do not believe that birds have any special or peculiar "sense of direction" different from that possessed by other wild animals to a greater or less degree.

Every continent shows certain main routes or highways of bird-travel, which, when sketched upon a map, are seen to bear definite relations to the coast-lines, mountain ranges, and great river-systems of the globe. In North America, Europe, and Eastern Asia, where we know the subject best, these mainly lie in a north-southerly direction. Such bodies of water as the Mediterranean Sea or our Great Lakes are crossed without deviation, but lofty mountains are avoided as far as possible. This is strikingly exemplified by the highlands of Southeastern Europe. Siberia and Northern Russia get their summer birds by way either of the Volga or of the Rhone-Rhine and Baltic valley, and the Danube forms a regular migration-route of certain European species that never cross the Alps to Italy and Africa, but go east to Persia and India for the winter. Our own birds do not regularly cross either the Rocky or Appalachian Mountain ranges.

It is probably to get a wide outlook upon the landscape—spread it like a map beneath their glance—that birds fly at so great a height as they usually do during their migrations. The sight of wedges of geese winging their way through the sky, so far away that they seem no larger than sparrows, is familiar, but lately we have come to know that the little birds also rise to great altitudes before undertaking their long flights. Persons observing the moon through powerful telescopes have recognized flocks of song-birds rushing across its face, and have estimated them to be from fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred feet above the surface of the earth. In December, 1896, the meteorologists at Blue Hill, Massachusetts, while measuring the altitude of clouds by triangulation, made instrumental observations of flocks of ducks, and found them to be flying about one thousand feet above the valley, and at the rate of nearly forty-eight miles an hour. There seems no doubt that this altitude is often greatly exceeded, but even it would afford an immensely extensive outlook, and enable birds (which are remarkably far-sighted) to discover and recognize landmarks far in advance. This is nothing more than an extension of the familiar performance of homing pigeons, which rise to about eighteen hundred feet, when liberated one hundred and twenty-five miles beyond any point familiar to them, before striking out homeward, while those set free (as has been

frequently done) over three hundred miles from any point they know, rise nearly out of sight in an effort to get their bearings.

I must confess, however, that this goes only part way towards solving the mystery of how birds find their way over vast spaces of ocean. Numbers of our shore-birds, such as plovers and curlews, fly straight from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland to the West Indies or South America: some will halt at the Bermudas and some go right by, and pass with equal scorn of rest over the Antilles. All these are strong. long-winged fliers, and prominent among them is the golden plover, which is world-wide in its distribution and fearless of space. It breeds only within the Arctic Circle unless possibly, as Hudson suspects, there be a breeding colony on the Antarctic Continent, to which, with certain other birds, it seems to resort every year by way of Cape Horn and the Falkland Islands. The great majority of those of Patagonia and Argentina, however, go all the way to Alaska and Greenland each year to lay their eggs. Similarly, this plover returns annually from the Siberian tundras to India, Ceylon, and China, and thence spreads over the East Indies to New Zealand. Still more remarkable, however, is its performance in the North Pacific region, where every season it appears at the proper time in Hawaii, the Ladrones, Fiji, Samoa, and the other island-groups of that vast ocean, none of which is less than two thousand miles from the nearest mainland. Flocks of curlews migrate regularly between New Zealand and Australia, twelve hundred miles.

But these aërial feats are by no means confined to water-fowl. Landbirds constantly travel between the mainland and such distant islands as Madagascar, the Canaries, or Bermuda,—even our tiny ruby-throated humming-bird. In Oceanica migrative habits are observable that seem to have no part in the general equatorial-polar movement,—the practice, for instance, of that local cuckoo which annually comes from the Fiji Islands to New Zealand to breed and then goes back. These islands are fifteen hundred miles apart.

The travelling at night seems an odd thing until we study it. Then it becomes evident that otherwise most birds could have no time to get sufficient subsistence. Their food comes to most of them in so small particles, and their digestion of it is so rapid, that it requires almost incessant effort to supply the need. That this is the secret of their night journeying is shown by the fact that such birds as obtain their food on the wing do not travel by night, but proceed wholly in the day-time, since they can forage as they fly.

On clear nights, and especially moonlit ones, the migrants fly high and far, reading the chart of their route beneath them almost as well as by day, and we see or hear little of them. But when the nights are dark and misty, yet not stormy enough to prevent them attempting to get forward, the birds skim low over the treetops and houses, feeling their way from point to point, and often getting so bewildered that they stop altogether.

Such nights come more often in the fall than in the spring, and no one who is abroad in a quiet rural place on a warm, cloudy evening of September can fail to hear (unless prevented by the pestiferous locusts!) the incessant voices of passing birds in the murk above him, calling to one another and doing their best to find the way and keep together.

So they drift by us, journeying leisurely southward through the bright autumnal weather, keeping pace with the turning of the leaves till they forget the vari-colored carpet of the northern earth in the green velvet of tropical lands, and have escaped the chill and desolation that follow hard after them.

Is the habit of migrating on the increase, or is it diminishing? Do birds tend to become more vagrant or more sedentary? I am inclined to the latter view. Many species, no doubt, have in modern times decidedly extended their range, owing to the opportunities afforded by spreading civilization, and in some cases this seems to have affected the migratory habit, enabling birds, perhaps by furnishing food or shelter, or both, to stay where formerly they were unwilling to remain from one season to another. This is likely to go on.

It would seem as though this ought to be the tendency, and that the migratory habit ought, after a time, to disappear, because it is, on the whole, a burden and hardship, handicapping its followers in the struggle for existence. The exertion required, the time wasted, the perils encountered in these immense journeys, seem the reverse of economical, and a logical view of the matter seems to suggest that they should cease, and that all birds should gradually become capable of living all the year round in substantially the same place, as the greater part of them now do.

THEIR LAST TREK: A TALE OF THE VELD

BY H. ANDERSON BRYDEN

Author of " Kloof and Kerroo," " An Exiled Scot," " Gun and Camera in South Africa"

HE sun was setting as usual in a glow of marvellous splendor as Alida Van Zyl came out from her hartebeest house—a rough wattle and daub structure thatched with reeds—and, shading her eyes, looked across the country. The little house stood on the lower slopes of the Queebe Hills, no great way from Lake Ngami. It was a wonderful sunset. In the northeast a thousand flakes of cloud flushed with crimson-lake, just as they had flushed above the vast plains of that wild Ngami country a million times before. Near the sky line, in a

blaze of red and gold, the sun sank rapidly, a mass of fire so dazzling that Alida's eyes could not bear to dwell upon it. Up towards the zenith the cool and wondrous calm of the clear, translucent, pale-green sky contrasted strangely with the battle of color beneath.

Alida shaded her eyes again, looked keenly down the rude wagon track that led up to the dwelling, and listened. As she had expected—for she had news of her husband's coming from the lake—she presently heard the faint cries of a native—that would be Hans Hottentot, the wagon-driver—and then through the still air the full, thick, pistol-like crack of the wagon-whip. At these sounds her somewhat impassive face lightened and she turned into the hut again.

In twenty minutes' time the wagon had drawn up in front of the dwelling, and Karl Van Zyl, a big, strong Dutchman of seven and twenty, had dismounted from his good gray nag and embraced his wife, who now stood with a face beaming with joy, clasping her two-year-old child in her arms ready to receive him.

"Zo, Alie," said Karl, holding his young wife by the shoulders, and looking first tenderly at her broad, kindly face, and then at the yellow-haired child lying in her arms, "here we are at last. It has been a long hunt, but a pretty good one. I left a wagon-load of ivory, rhenoster horns, and hides at Jan Stromboom's at the lake, and got a good price for them. I traded fifty good oxen as well and sold them at three pounds and ten shillings a head to Stromboom also, after no end of a haggle. It was worth a day's bargaining, though; the beasts cost me no more than thirty shillings apiece all told." Then, laying the back of his huge sunburnt hand against the cheek of the sleeping babe, which he had just kissed, he added, "And how is little Jan? Surely the child has grown a foot since I left him?"

Alida smiled contentedly, patted her man's arm, and answered, "Yes, the child has done well since the cool weather came, and he grows every day. He gets as 'slim' (cunning) as a monkey, and crawls so that I have to keep a boy to watch him, the little rascal. But kom binnen and have supper. You must be starving."

Van Zyl gave some orders to his Hottentot man as to his horse, the trek oxen, and some loose cows and calves, and went indoors.

Half an hour later husband and wife came forth again, and, sitting beneath the pleasant starlight, talked of the future. Their coffee stood on a little table in front of them, and Van Zyl, stretching out his long legs, and displaying two or three inches of bare ankle above his velschoons,—the up-country Boer is seldom guilty of socks,—puffed with huge contentment at a big-bowled pipe.

"Karl," said his wife, after hearing of his last expedition, "I am getting tired of this flat Ngami country, with never a soul to speak to while you are away. When shall we give it up and go back to the

Transvaal? I long to see the blue hills again and to hear the voices of friends. Surely you have done well enough these last few years. You can buy and stock a good farm—six thousand morgen * at least. And you told me when we married—now three years agone, Karl,"—she laid her hand upon his as she spoke,—"that you did not mean to

spend all your life, like your father, in the hunting veld."

"No, Alie, I don't," rejoined Van Zyl, taking his wife's hand into his two and pressing it tenderly. "You shall go back to the Transvaal, my lass, and we will buy a farm in Rustenburg and live comfortably and go to Nachtmal (communion) once a quarter. And if I do want a hunt now and again, why, I'll cross the Crocodile River and try the Nuanetsi and Sabi River veld, where Roelof Van Staden and his friends trek (journey) to. But we must have one more trek together, Alie, and this time you and the child shall go with me. Coming to the lake, on my way home from this last hunt, I met messengers from Ndala, captain of a tribe far up the Okavango, who asks me to take my wagon up to his kraal and hunt elephants in his country. He promises me the half of all ivory shot and will find spoorers and show me his best veld and give me every help. Twice before has Ndala sent to me thus, and once to my father in years gone by. I believe it is a splended hunt-Elephants as thick as blesbocks, thousands of buffaloes, plenty of rhenoster, and lots of other game. We ought, with luck, to pick up four hundred pounds' worth of ivory. And so, wife, we'll pack the wagon, get more powder and cartridges at the lake, and trek up to Ndala's."

"And this shall be your last trek in this country, Karl?" asked his wife.

"Myn Maghtet, the very last," said Van Zyl. "How soon can we start?"

"I shall be ready in three days," returned Alie.

"In three days be it," said Van Zyl in his deep voice. And then, with a mighty yawn, he stretched himself, knocked the ashes from his pipe, and, putting his arm round his wife's waist, went indoors for the night.

Two months later the Van Zyls were nearing Ndala's kraal on the Okavango (sometimes called the Cubangwe) River—that great and little-known stream flowing from the northwest towards Lake Ngami. They had had a hard trek of it, past the lake, across many streams and small rivers, skirting many a swamp and lagoon, and now at last one hot afternoon, as they looked up the broad and shining river, they set eyes on a green island, dotted about with huts, lying in mid-stream, and knew that they were in sight of Ndala's kraal. Hans, the Hottentot, had once been up to this place and knew Ndala, and Hans

^{*} A morgen is rather more than two acres.

pointed out the Chief's hut and showed them where their wagon should stand by the river bank, and so they outspanned and prepared to make themselves comfortable. Across the river, beyond the island, the country undulated gently in well-wooded, bush-clad, sandy ridges, with here and there a palm or a baobab to catch the eye. Reddish bowlders of sandstone projected from the river's brim, between the southern shore and the island, forming a little cataract over which the swift waters poured with a pleasant and not too angry or unseemly swirl. And as they unyoked the tired oxen and Alida Van Zyl descended from the wagon to stretch her legs and look about her, all seemed fair and pleasant and peaceful to the travel-stained trekkers. For they had had a hard passage up the river, and the cattle were in need of rest and good feeding if they were to drag the great wagon back to the lake and—Alida's soul rejoiced in the thought of it—to the dearly loved Transvaal once more.

And now long, narrow, dug-out canoes shot out from the island and came across the stream, with envoys from the chief to know whose was the wagon and what was the business of the newcomers, and to bring a message of greeting and peace from Ndala, the lord and ruler of all this remote and little known country.

While his wife unpacked some of her wagon gear, and April, the foreloper, got out the pots and kettle and lit a fire to prepare the evening meal, Van Zyl, taking with him Hans as interpreter, ferried across in one of the native canoes to interview Ndala. The chief, a tall, youngish Cubangwe, with a rather shifty eye, received them in his kotla, an open enclosure adjoining his hut, surrounded by a tall reed fence. He expressed himself pleased to see Van Zyl, and hoped that he might have much fortune with the elephants in his country. Then Van Zyl, having thanked the Chief for his courtesy, ordered his man, Hans, to lay before Ndala the presents which had been brought These were a fine blanket of gaudy colors, a quantity of beads, a cheap smooth-bore musket, and some powder, bullets, and caps. As these articles were temptingly laid before Ndala, the Chief's eyes gleamed approvingly and, in spite of his efforts, a broad grin overspread his features. Then more conversation followed between Ndala and Hans,—conversation which Van Zyl was unable to follow,—and presently, after half an hour's interview, the reception was at an end. Van Zyl was paddled back to his wagon, and during supper related to his wife the friendly reception he had met with from the Cubangwe captain.

Next morning at about eight o'clock Ndala in person came over to the Boer's camp. Never before had he seen a white man's wagon, and he was naturally burning with curiosity to set eyes upon the treasures gathered within the recesses of that mysterious house upon wheels.

He brought with him as presents a goat, some Kaffir corn, and a tusk of ivory weighing about thirty pounds. Nothing would content him but that he should mount the fore-kist (box) of the wagon and pry into that strangely fascinating interior. He saw many things that stirred his cupidity. Two fine rifles, cartridges, bags of sugar and coffee, cases of trading gear-store clothes, cheap knives, blankets, beads, looking-glasses, powder, lead, and other rich and rare things which were being got out for purposes of trading and with a view to resettling the contents of the wagon after the confusion of the long trek. And with the greedy delight of a miser with his gold he plunged his arms up to the elbows in a case of blue and white bird's-eve beads which lay too temptingly exposed to his gaze, and asked that the whole of this fabulous treasure should be despatched to his kraal. To this Van Zyl demurred. He would give the chief a portion of the beads, a complete suit of corded clothes, a shirt, and a pair of velshoons. After a long and heated argument, conducted through the interpretation of Hans, Ndala somewhat sulkily gave way, and expressed himself content to take what the Boer offered him. As for Van Zyl, his eyes flashed angrily as, turning to his wife, now sitting in the shade near the back of the wagon, he said:

"They are all alike, these kraal (naked) Kaffir captains—thieves and schelms, only desiring to rob of his all the white man who ventures into their country. I thought from what Hans had said that this Ndala was a decent fellow; but, allemaghte! he's no better than the rest of the dirty cattle. However, there's ivory to be got here, without doubt, and we must have patience."

"For my part," Alida replied, "I like the appearance of this man not at all. Watch him, Karl. I believe he will try to do you an ill turn before you have finished with him."

Meanwhile Ndala had been holding conversation with Hans, as he peered about the camp and inspected the cattle, and especially that to him wonderful curiosity, the Dutchman's hunting-horse. Van Zyl had started from the Queebe Hills with three nags. Of these one had died of horse-sickness, while another had been killed by lions, so that only his gray, a tried old favorite, salted against the sickness, and a splendid beast in the hunting veld, remained to him. Ndala gazed long and curiously at the shapely gray as Hans indicated its good points and expatiated on its manifold virtues.

Once more the Chief wandered back to the wagon, where Van Zyl was measuring out some of the blue and white beads into a skin bag. His greed was too much for him, and again through Hans he demanded that the Dutchman should hand him over the whole caseful, pointing out that, considering his importance as monarch of all those regions, so trifling a present ought not to be denied to him.

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But Van Zyl was, like many another Dutch Afrikander, a man of quick temper, little accustomed to be dictated to by natives, who, in his own country, were mere hewers of wood and drawers of water to the white men. *The blood sprang to his face, his eyes flashed angrily, and, flinging down the leathern bag of beads, which he had just tied up, he turned angrily upon the Chief.

"Tell him," he said, with an impatient gesture to Hans, "that he may take it or leave it. I have offered gifts enough until I see elephants and gather ivory. If Ndala is not content, tell him I'll inspan the wagon again and trek out of his country, and go into some other veld where elephants are at least as plentiful and chiefs more accom-

modating."

Ndala had taken one quick glance at the angry Boer as he burst forth, and now, till he had finished speaking, stood motionless, impassive, with eyes downcast. He uttered not another word to Van Zyl, but, with a swift motion of his hand from Hans to the bag of beads, said to the Hottentot:

"Carry it to the boat. I will go across again."

Accompanied by three of his headmen, who had come to the Dutch camp with him, Ndala stalked down to the shore, talking meanwhile quietly to Hans. Arrived at his boat, he saw his presents carefully bestowed, and then, taking his seat, was ferried over to his kraal.

Late that night, while the Van Zyls slept peacefully in their wagon, Hans, the Hottentot, crept stealthily down to the river, without waking a single member of the camp, and was ferried across to Ndala's by a couple of strong-armed natives waiting for him with the canoe. Arrived at the island, he was conducted to the Chief's hut, and there, alone with Ndala, he sat in deep and secret colloquy for a full hour or more. Presently he was ferried back very quietly to the south shore again, where, creeping into his own camp, he regained the shelter of his blanket without having disturbed or wakened a soul.

Next morning a canoe came across early from Ndala laden with a number of sweet watermelons, some more grain, and another goat as a present to the Van Zyls. At the same time the Chief sent a message to Van Zyl to say that if he were ready for a hunt on the following day some of his tribesmen would be ready to act as spoorers and show him a troop of elephants which was known to be frequenting some bush about half a day's journey from the kraal. This was excellent news, and Van Zyl brightened up instantly.

"Myn maghtet, Alie," he said to his wife, after taking a huge pull at his big kommetje of coffee, "the kerel is not so bad as I thought him. Tell his headman, Hans," he said to his Hottentot, "that I'll swim the horse across as soon as day breaks to-morrow and go after

the elephants."

For the remainder of that day the Boer camp was busily employed: Van Zyl and his two men in completing a big and strong thorn kraal for the cattle against the attack of lions; Alida Van Zyl in finishing off some biltong (dried meat), cooking bread, tidying up the stores, and putting up various articles required by her husband while away hunting. Towards afternoon Van Zyl, having finished his work at the ox-kraal, opened a keg of gunpowder, heated some lead and tin, and sat himself down to reloading some cartridges for his elephant rifle.

Near him, in the shade of the spreading acacia-tree by which the wagon was outspanned, crawled on a couple of blankets little Jan, his two-year-old child. Now and then the big Boer would pause from his work to admire the strong, chubby limbs of his infant son, or would stretch forth a big hand to tickle the restless little rascal, eliciting from him crows, gurgles, and screams of childish laughter. Once Alida came from her cooking to look at the pair.

"Maghte," said her husband, as he looked up at her from playing with the boy, "how the child grows. If he goes on like this, he will be strong enough to carry a rifle by the time he is ten years old."

They retired early that night,—before eight o'clock,—and at the earliest streak of dawn Karl Van Zyl had drunk his coffee, eaten some meat and a rusk, and said farewell to his wife and child. He kissed Alida's broad, smooth cheek, and yet more tenderly his sleeping child, lying there up in the wagon on the kartel-bed, in the big hole which his sire had lately quitted. And then, taking with him Hans and his horse, they went down to the stream. The good gray had swum rivers before and understood the business, yet he paused for a moment on the brink, looking forth over the broad, swift stream, and snuffed the air once or twice.

"Crocodiles, oude kerel (old fellow)," said his master, patting him on the neck. "They shall not harm you."

The gray tossed his head, shook his bit, and Hans, looking at him, said to his master:

"He is all right, Baas. He trusts you. Witfoot will swim."

So, loosing the long raw-hide riem attached to the head-stall, they led Witfoot down, got into a couple of canoes, and pushed off. Witfoot swam quietly and cleverly between the two canoes, and, presently, passing below Ndala's island, they reached the northern bank. Here Ndala was waiting for them with a number of his tribesmen. They exchanged greetings, and then the Cubangwe captain picked out a dozen of his best hunters to accompany Van Zyl and his Hottentot and show them where the elephants were. And so, bidding friendly farewells, they parted.

Hans marched just ahead of Van Zyl, carrying, as he always did, till game was known to be near, his master's rifle and a bandolier full of spare cartridges. One of Ndala's men carried the second rifle, with which Hans himself was usually entrusted. For three hours they marched northwest under the blazing sun, over heavy sand-belts, through bush and thin forest, until high noon, when Van Zyl reined up his horse, pulled off his broad-brimmed hat, and wiped the sweat from his brow with his big colored print handkerchief.

"Hans," he said, looking round for Ndala's hunters, "those schepsels are surely spreading out very wide for the spoor. I haven't seen one of them for half an hour past." As he spoke he climbed

leisurely from the saddle and loosened the girths.

Hans, who alone knew why the men had vanished, answered him: "I don't think you will set eyes on them again, Baas. You may say your prayers, for your last hour is nigh, and I am going to shoot you."

Van Zyl heard the clicks of two hammers being cocked, and turned

swiftly round.

"That is a verdomned impudent joke of yours, Hans," he said, "for which I shall welt you handsomely when we get back to camp. Give me the gun!"

But Hans, standing within ten feet of his master, had the rifle at the ready, and there was a fiendish look in his eyes which Van Zyl had never before remarked.

"Don't move a step nearer," said the Hottentot, "but say your prayers, for before God I am going to shoot you dead."

Van Zyl saw that there was something more in the man's demeanor than he had bargained for. He turned a thought paler beneath his tan.

"What do you mean, Hans?" he said.

"I mean this," returned the Hottentot, still keeping his rifle ready.
"I haven't forgotten the cruel floggings I have had from you and your father in years gone by, and I am dog-tired of your service. Ndala has made me a good offer. We shall go halves in your goods and I am to take your wife for my own vrouw. And," added the man, with a brutal leer, "I shall make her a very good husband—if she behaves herself."

At that last foul insult Van Zyl clenched his fists, swore a great oath, and rushed at the Hottentot. But the man was too quick for him. He levelled his rifle, pulled trigger, and a heavy bullet crashed through the brain of the unfortunate Dutchman and passed out at the back of his skull, leaving a huge, gaping wound at the point of exit. Van Zyl dropped heavily upon the hot sand and never stirred again.

Regardless of the pool of blood welling swiftly from the warm body, the Hottentot proceeded leisurely to strip his late master of his clothes, into most of which he introduced his own squat and meagre figure. Then, mounting the gray horse, which had meanwhile been patiently grazing hard by, he rode off. A quarter of a mile away, before entering a patch of bush, he drew rein and looked back. As he expected, the vultures were already descending from the sky, prepared for their foul banquet. Some of them were even now collected on a thorn-tree near to the body. In a few hours their task would be finished and only Karl Van Zyl's bones would remain for the jackals and hyenas.

An hour before sunset that same afternoon, Alida Van Zyl sat in her wagon sewing. On the kartel by her side sat her little son, Jan, playing with a wooden doll rudely carved for him by April, their Basuto herd-boy and fore-loper. April himself was just now squatting by the camp-fire, looking after the stew-pot, and solacing his ease with an occasional pinch of Kaffir snuff. It was a lovely late afternoon, the heat of the day was passing, a pleasant breeze from the southeast moved upon the veld, and, as Alida opened her lungs and inhaled the clear, invigorating air, and rested peacefully after a day of work and washing, life, even in this remote wilderness, seemed very pleasant. Once or twice she looked up from her work and let her eyes rest on that fair scene in front of her. The ever-moving river, running its perpetual course southeastward, looked wondrously beautiful; its murmurs, as it swept over the low cataracts and swirled onward, sounded very sweet to the ear and suggested a perennial coolness. Bands of sandgrouse were coming in from their day in the veld to drink at the water's edge; their sharp but not unpleasing cries sounded constantly overhead as they sped swiftly to the stream, and then, after wheeling hither and thither twice or thrice, stooped suddenly to the margin, alighted, and drank thirstily. Skeins of wild duck passed up and down stream. Now and again splendid Egyptian geese took flight, and with noisy "honks" flew on strong pinions to some other part of the water or to the trees fringing the river course. Dainty avocets, sandpipers, and other wading birds were to be seen here and there in the shallows, while ashore the francolins were calling sharply to one another.

As she sat on the kartel with her feet resting on the wagon-box, Alida Van Zyl's thoughts ran in a pleasant current back to her Transvaal home. She pictured to herself the long, trying trek over, Lake Ngami and the weary Thirstland passed, Khama's and Secheli's countries traversed, and sweet Marico, in the Northwest Transvaal, entered. And from there Rustenburg, with its fair hills and valleys and smiling farmsteads, was, as it were, but a step. Three or four months of elephant hunting here at Ndala's, and her man would have finished his wanderings in these regions, and they would be inspanning and turning their faces for home again. And then peace from wanderings, and a

comfortable homestead, and the faces of kinsfolk and many friends. A pleasant, pleasant thought.

While she thus dreamed her day-dream of the future, a canoe had, unnoticed by her, shot across the stream and made its landing on the shore a hundred yards or so behind the wagon. In a few minutes

the sound of approaching footsteps made her look up from her sewing.

She saw—for the moment she believed her eyes must have deceived her—not five yards from the wagon Hans, the Hottentot—Hans, carrying her husband's rifle and tricked out in clothing, notwith-standing that sleeves and trowsers were most liberally turned up, at least three sizes too big for him. There was a strange look in the man's eyes, half guilty, half triumphant, as he glanced up at his mistress. What in the name of the Heer Gott could it all mean? And then a pang gripped her heart. Surely something had happened, else why was Hans back here at the wagon and alone? But Alida was a stout-hearted woman, and her husband had never yet met with a severe mishap. Surely, surely all was well?

"Hans," she cried, in the sharp, commanding voice she always used to her native servants, "what in the name of fortune are you back here for, and dressed up like a figure of fun? Whose are the clothes, and where is your master?"

Hans looked with an evil leer at his mistress.

"The clothes were the Baas's," he answered roughly, "and they are now mine. Surely you can recognize them? As for the Baas, he is dead. Ndala and I have settled all that, and we have divided his belongings, and you, Vrouw Van Zvl, are now to be my wife."

The man advanced close up to the wagon-box and again grinned hatefully at his mistress.

Alida turned very pale, but she mastered herself and replied with

angry scorn.

"What is this cock-and-bull story about the Baas being dead? You are drunk, man. I shall have you well thrashed for your lying when your master comes home. Be off and get under the wagon and go to

sleep. Loup, yo schelm!"

"The Baas will never come back again," returned the Hottentot. "I tell you he is dead. I shot him in the veld." He put his finger to a dark stain of crimson upon the collar of his coat. "See, that is Karl Van Zyl's blood. Dead he is, I say. And now get down from the wagon and let me kiss you. You are to be my wife in future, and, mind you, you'll have to behave yourself."

Something as she looked at the Hottentot and his absurd clothing and the dark stain of blood told Alida Van Zyl that all this was God's or the Devil's truth she was listening to. But, like most of her race, she was a woman of strong nerves, bred up through long generations of ancestors to a life of rough toils and many dangers. She was horror-stricken, but not in the least likely to faint. Suddenly she half rose, stretched up her hand to the side of the wagon, and took down from the hooks on which it rested a loaded carbine, which Karl Van Zyl always left for her protection. Cocking the weapon, she levelled it at Hans and threatened to pull the trigger. Hans ducked as the carbine was levelled and sprang out of harm's way. Darting round to the side of the wagon, he yelled in a shrill, angry voice:

"I shall come for you later on, my fine Vrouw, and when it is dark I shall know how to manage you. Put away that gun, or you may come

to the same end as your husband."

He passed away down to where the canoes lay, and held converse with some of the tribesmen there, and there was silence in the camp.

But, as Alida felt, the silence was in itself very ominous.

In a little while, as the swift African twilight fell, April, the Basuto, crept up to the wagon and whispered to his mistress. Alida, who for the last half hour had been very busy with certain preparations in the interior of the wagon, came to the fore-kist, carbine in hand, and listened to him. April, with a scared face, told her rapidly that things were so wrong that he was going to make a bolt for it and take to the veld, and so try to make Moremi's town at Lake Ngami. Hans had threatened to shoot him, and he could expect no protection from Ndala. What to advise his mistress he knew not. She asked him if her husband was really dead, and whether she could herself expect aid from Ndala and his people.

Alas! April assured her that the Baas had indeed been slain, so much had he gleaned from Ndala's people. As for the Chief himself, he had the worst opinion of him, and upon the whole he, April, thought his mistress had better make friends with the Hottentot. Later on, help might come, if he himself could get safely to the lake.

But April would stay no longer—not even at his mistress's earnest entreaty—and crept away. A minute later Alida heard the stamp of feet, sounds of a struggle, and then a blood-curdling scream rang through the growing darkness. More struggling, the sound of thuds, a smothered groan, and then all was silence. Alida, listening with awed, white face, and nerves at their fullest tension, shuddered and drew back to her child. That was poor April's death-scream beyond a doubt.

She lighted a lantern and then, sitting far back in the wagon close to the sleeping child, waited for the next scene of this dark tragedy. Who can picture the distress of this poor creature, strong, able-bodied, yet helpless against a cruel destiny? To quit the wagon would be madness. If she attempted to escape with her child into the veld, a few hours of spooring by the morning light would bring her Vol. LXV.-40

enemies upon her. Dark and bitter as have been the hours of many a Dutch Afrikander woman in her time of trial, few can have endured the tortures that racked the soul of Alida Van Zyl that night. With pale, set face she sat there in mute yet stubborn despair, waiting, watching, praying to the God who it seemed had now clean forsaken her.

An hour after dark Hans came up to the wagon again.

"Well, Vrouw," he said, before showing himself, "is it peace?"

"Aye," returned Alida in a dry voice and with a strange, wild look in her eyes, "it is peace. I am in your hands. You may climb

up."

Hans appeared at the front of the wagon and looked at his mistress. She had no gun in her hand. Apparently all was well. He climbed to the wagon-box and turned to face her. At that moment Alida Van Zyl seized the candle from her open lantern and dropped it into a cask of gunpowder which stood with the head off just behind the kartel.

The darkness was for one awful moment broken by a blaze of hellish fire, a frightful explosion rocked the earth and rent the air for miles, and in that dire catastrophe Alida Van Zyl, her child, Hans, the Hottentot, and half a dozen natives prying around the wagon to watch the progress of affairs, were, with the wagon itself, blown to a thousand pieces.

And so miserably ended the last trek of Karl and Alida Van Zyl.

THE ARMY OF THE SEA BY THOMAS BICKET

The long, white legions glisten in the sun,
Endless and armed for instant strife they run
In monstrous phalanx, sweeping in abreast.
Far out, far out, where seethes the wild unrest,
What fearful glories have those foemen won,
What deeds of blood have they in anger done
And shrieked upon the night-wind unsuppressed!
And down, far down, (why crawls the conger so?)
Are staring eyes and shrunken lips that say
Poor, piteous protest to the whirlwind foe
That, striking them, roared on for further prey.
O fleets and powers, what war-won songs have ye
More dread than sing this Army of the Sea?



THE ALPINE POSE

THE ALPINE ROSE

Fourth in the Series of Mormon Stories begun in the January number

BY MRS. J. K. HUDSON

HE Zion of the Latter-Day Saints, Salt Lake City, is set amid a thousand hills. Every street shows a vista of mountains. Morning, roon, and night, each in turn discovers new charms to the lover of color and beauty-lines. Snow-capped peaks glisten in every direction; deep shadows lie across the mountain masses, bringing out as with a master-stroke the chiaroscuro of a great picture. At every turn new outlines present themselves, and new shades are spread upon this cyclorama of hills. But it is not until one ascends the "benches," as they are called in mountain parlance, the giant steps to the loftier range, that the landscape can be seen in all its glowing beauty. Long avenues of stately trees, the Lombardy poplar, mark off the city and many miles of the valley into parallelograms, imparting a uniqueness to the entire country. Twenty miles away is Great Salt Lake, reflecting the color note of the sky-sometimes sapphire, sometimes the most delicate morning-glory blue, and again black and purplish or gray and foam-flecked. The lake is bordered with salt marshes and barren sanddunes. Nothing lives in its waters, and the everlasting salt-springs that well up from its depths keep it of a briny consistency far exceeding that of the ocean and only a little less than that of the Dead Sea. A short distance from its shores the earth is richly productive when irrigated by fresh water, and this is true of the entire valley, stretching for thirty miles or more, high-hung between the lofty ranges of the Rocky Mountains. No other bodies of salt water are known in all the region, but Great Salt Lake reaches for ninety miles towards the northwest country after leaving the city at its head. The Mormons named

the little river that flows into it from Utah Lake, a beautiful body of fresh water farther up the valley, the Jordan, and many a superstitious Mormon from the old countries believes that when he has crossed the river Jordan he is indeed come into the Holy Land. If he is susceptible to the influence of beauty in nature, then no one can wonder, for if he stand on a height that reveals to him the valley of the Great Salt Lake bathed in the rosy glow of sunset, he has seen a vision rarely surpassed in any part of the world.

The founder of this capital of New Zion chose the Temple site and laid out the city far enough removed from the lake to insure the perfection of the park-like plan he had in mind. He foresaw the trees and vines and fruit-gardens of his people, the harvest-fields of his laborers, and the comforting flower-plots of the homesick Mormon women. It was a great plan, magnificently carried out—if one stop not to study

the social conditions that made his kingdom possible.

Salt Lake City still presents one of the most absorbingly interesting fields for the sociologist to be found on this continent. The conditions most vital to a people's life are there far beneath the surface, and cannot be comprehended in a day, nor by a sojourner who looks exclusively through either Mormon or Gentile eyes. Two generations have been born into the Mormon religion, and the traditions of the church are as binding to them as those of century-old creeds to their followers. The man whom you are told has "broken away" from the faith, you find upon acquaintance to be half a Mormon still. The "good Mormon" who is pointed out to you will be found to be, in nine cases out of ten, half Gentile.

Wandering about this peculiar city, a stranger in a strange land, my attention was one day attracted by a narrow, dingy shop window that looked upon a side street. It was a foreign appearance that drew my eyes to this obscure window, and I involuntarily went close to it that I might see the dusty wares, recalling as I did so my peculiar good fortune in the way of finding treasures in pawn-shops in foreign lands. There were a few pairs of decrepit spectacles, some half-dozen watchcases, and the usual bunch of seals bearing insignia of secret orders, but no such work of the ancient silversmith's art as I once saw in this same Western city—a girdle made of genuine old Spanish book-clasps, each one bearing a head in relief that was worthy of place in a collection of miniatures. No, there was nothing in that neglected lot that any "collector" would want, and yet one more glance over the medley could do no harm. One corner of the window was quite dark, and I could not see what it was that lay apart from the other things on a bit of faded velvet. I shaded my eyes with my hand and looked more closely still. No, it was not a watch. It was something curious and strange. I went inside in that quick yet cautious way so well known to

seekers after rare things, as if the multitude were behind hurrying to the same out-of-the-way shop in order to secure the same old Spode teapot or Empire fan.

"That," said the bent old man, with a pleased look in his face. "that is the Alpine rose. Do you see the little plant? It is just an inch and a quarter in height and has thirteen full-blown roses and several buds. I have counted them many times. That little trinket has lain in my window for years, and nobody ever noticed it before. It is almost as old as the settlement, for we came over from Switzerland with a shipload of the early converts, and crossed the plains with the push-cart. But it was too hard for poor Jeanne, though she was eager to come. I was a watchmaker in the old country, and when we decided to join the Mormons in America I brought along part of my tools and a few watches, but most of them were lost before we got here. These two little crystals are some that I brought all the way, and after Jeanne died I put the Alpine rose between them and bound the edges with this bit of silver. Years after that, when the hard times came on, I put it in the window, thinking that some one might buy it, but no one ever asked to see it. I used to stand at the window and watch people as they looked at it curiously for a momen, and then passed on. I wondered too, for it is a pretty thing. The roses still retain their vellow shade and the stamens are perfect. It is the miniature image of the yellow rose that grows so commonly in the gardens here now, and when it was fresh it was as golden as they. The foliage is different, for this is really a kind of moss, but we call it the Alpine rose in the old country, because it grows away up on the Alps in the snow."

"You brought this from Switzerland, then?"

"Oh, no. We found it here, away up at snow-line on the mountain over there above Emigration Cañon. You see, Jeanne was ill when we got here, and the homesickness made her worse. She longed for the snow, and begged me to take her up on the mountain where she could put her hands in it. The poor girl was too weak to walk, and there were no roads and very few trails then. But she kept on begging every day to be taken to the snow, and by-and-bye, when I saw that she was failing, I made up my mind to try it. She said it was the last thing I could do for her, and I had not the heart to refuse, impossible as it seemed for her to climb the mountain. I got a freighter to take her out to the canon, where the garrison now is, and we started up the mountain about ten o'clock in the morning. I could show you the very spot if we were there. Jeanne could only walk a few steps at a time, and part of the way I carried her. It was hard climbing, and I thought time and again that she would give out and be willing to turn back, but when I mentioned it she started and almost ran for a little way, she was so much afraid that she would not get to the snow. Whenever we

lost sight of it she would grow impatient and urge me onward; then when we could see it again, as it lay on the mountain top or in the gulches, her face would light up and she would consent to stop a bit to get her breath. At last, when we were within a few steps of the first little patch of snow, the tears began to run down her face, and she fell with a cry right into it and buried her hands in it. It was pitiful to see her. I lifted her and held her in my arms, but she would not leave the snow. She took it in her feverish hands and pressed it to the bright spots on her cheeks, and thanked me over and over for bringing her to it. It was like home, she said, and now if we could only go a little higher and find the edelweiss! It was very sad when I told her that the edelweiss did not grow here. She said that we surely would find it if we climbed high enough. So we went on, a short way at a time, resting often, my poor Jeanne almost exhausted, but I was afraid to say anything more about going back, it excited her so.

"Suddenly she let go my hand, and with a little laugh gathered her two hands full of snow and held it towards me as tenderly as if she had found a young bird. 'It is the Alpine rose! it is the Alpine rose!' she cried. 'See, it is in full bloom! Oh, the blessed flower! it grew

for me!'

"Sure enough, there were the little yellow stars shining against the white. We had gathered it often on Monte Rosa in Switzerland, for we lived at the foot of the great mountain. It was worth the climb and the weariness, she said. And, indeed, it was good to see her, she was so happy. She was willing to go down then, and as long as she could she carried the snow with the tiny plant growing out of it in her hand. As we got towards the foot of the mountain, and the snow began to melt, she took the rose from its bed and laid it in her mother's letter that she always carried in her bosom, and so we brought it home.

"When Jeanne died, I put it in the glass as you see, and have kept it ever since. I did lay it on Jeanne's heart once, when she was in her coffin, and I thought to bury it with her, but I could not do it. It was all I had left of her, and I thought she would like me to keep it."

"Jeanne is dead, then?"

"Yes, madam, long ago; and the other one, too."

"The other one,—who was she? You did not speak of another," I said severely, being in no mood to hear of another in Jeanne's place so soon after listening to her touching story. "You married again, then, after Jeanne died?"

"No, madam, before."

And the old man looked beyond me, out through the open door to the line of blue mountains. He seemed to forget me for a time, but I could not go. I held the Alpine rose in my hand, and looked at it and then at him, wondering the while of what stuff women's hearts are made, and if men's hearts sometimes break too.

Presently he said, with a long sigh: "It's all over, and I have not long to wait. I have not thought so much about it for years. The little rose brought it all up fresh again.

"Amy came to help take care of the children after Jeanne grew so ill, and Brother Brigham counselled me to marry her before the little ones were left motherless. It was very kind and thoughtful on his part, but Jeanne did not feel reconciled to it. I had been counselled before to take another wife, but I could not tell Jeanne, and Brother Brigham said that it would not be the same if I married in secret. He said that Jeanne needed the discipline of her religion while she was on earth, and the children needed a mother who was well enough to take care of them. This was, no doubt, all true, but I would gladly have spared Jeanne the suffering if I could. There was no way. She knew it as well as I, and so we took Amy into our family. It was a hard blow to Jeanne. She had been like a mother to Amy, and I had never thought of such a thing as making the girl my wife. The doctrine of celestial marriage was not told to us in Switzerland. The elders of the church who came over with us explained that we had been given all that we could understand of the gospel of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and that this part of the system was reserved for our later understanding. I suppose it had to be so. You see, madam, there are a great many ignorant people among the immigrants, and the missionaries are instructed to preach only the first principles of the religion in the old countries. They can't talk about polygamy and the tithes and some other things that are hard to explain, and so many people get here without knowing very much about what they are coming to. Some expect to have good farms given them when they arrive, and others have been told of the community of work when the colony first settled in Salt Lake, and take it for granted that that condition still prevails, and that everything is divided evenly,-as it would have been, of course, if the plan of the founders of the church had been carried out. It was Brother Brigham's hope to see all share alike of the fruits of Zion."

"And yet Brigham Young was a very rich man, was he not?"

"Oh, certainly; he had the church to take care of, and then so many Gentiles came in that it was impossible for the Mormons to carry out their plans. They have had to give up a great deal and make great sacrifices of principle. No people in the world have been more persecuted for their religion's sake, and no sect ever made a braver struggle. As to the women, I know that they often say they would be better Mormons if it were not for polygamy, but they know, too, that that is commanded of God, and is taught in the Bible by both precept and example. If it is a cross, it is their duty to bear it uncomplainingly, and many of

them do. They believe in their religion and love it, and the Mormon church is no exception to the rule that women are the strongest supporters of the church everywhere, especially in Christendom.

"But I forget that I am not in the ward meeting-house. We all talk there, and no man knows when he may be called upon. Every Mormon can preach, after a fashion; it is a part of his education. He has to begin when he is very young, too. That makes us all able to speak up for our religion, and they do say that some of us do not know when to quit when once we get going. It is very kind of you, madam, to say that you are interested. It is true that there is nothing in all history like the growth of the Mormon church, and we expect to rule not only this nation, but this entire continent. That is foreordained, and was prophesied by Joseph Smith many years ago. We will spread on down the ridge of this continent, through Old Mexico, where we already have strong colonies, and towards the sea on either hand. Now, pardon me," and dropping into his reminiscent mood he continued:

"Yes, little Jacob was born before Jeanne died, but she did not enjoy him as she did the other children—she was too ill. He was Amy's first baby. It is a long time ago. Amy naturally felt grieved because I missed Jeanne. She thought I should be satisfied with her and the children and little Jacob, especially as he was the only boy, but I could not. I felt lost, and the house was lonesome, and I went off to the mines. I was gone five years. Then one day I thought I would come home and get Jacob, he must be such a big boy. I found Amy ill just like Jeanne. She said the Lord sent me home to say good-by to her. I could not take little Jacob, it would have broken her heart. So I stayed, and when she died I buried her beside Jeanne. I just keep the little shop now, and last year I sent Jacob back to Switzerland to learn the watchmaker's trade. The girls are all married. That is, Jeanne's girls; they are all likely young women and married well; one of them married a bishop."

"And you are a good Mormon yet yourself?" I asked.

"Well, I am a Mormon, anyhow. I can't say that I am a good Mormon, perhaps, for I have not lived my religion in the matter of marriage for many years now. But it is a mighty hard thing for a man to live in polygamy. Since Brother Brigham's death the church is not so strict about it. I think the priesthood began to see that it was a hard life for the men—to be always settling differences about little things and trying to keep everything even. I have advised Jacob never to go into it."

"Do you wish to sell the Alpine rose?" I asked in a hesitating voice, fearing to wound the only tender spot I had discovered in the old watchmaker's feelings during the long story that he evidently had plenty of time to tell and to which I was glad to listen.

"Why, yes, I reckon so," he answered. And while he meditated over the price I rapidly counted up in my mind the amount that was left in my tourist's pocket-book, wondering if I would have enough left to take me home, for I had determined to have the Alpine rose at any cost. His gaze grew more and more affectionate, I thought, as he held it in his hand, and when he looked up to speak I almost held my breath.

"I think I ought to have seventy-five cents for it," he said.

SOME HINTS ON HOME GARDENING

BY EBEN E. REXFORD

Author of " Flowers : How To Grow Them"

I.

THE LAWN.

OST suburban people want a lawn, with flower-beds and shrubs about the house. Some begin by planting shrubs or making flower-beds, expecting the lawn to follow. They have a vague idea that it is an easy matter to make a lawn,—in fact, some persons seem to think a lawn will make itself. The natural consequence of this way of thinking is, that such persons seldom have a lawn that is worth calling one. In improving the home-grounds, the first thing to be considered is the formation of the lawn. When that is made, and not until then, flower-beds may be made and shrubs planted in such a manner as to make them permanently effective. This cannot be accomplished if the lawn has to be made to fit an already planted yard.

Lawn-making is not so difficult as most persons seem to think. You must begin right if you would attain a satisfactory degree of success. The first thing to do is to grade the ground evenly. Most persons prefer a lawn that slopes away from house to road in an almost imperceptible incline of surface. Such a lawn is easier to make than a level one, because any little departure from a perfectly even surface will be far less noticeable. To secure the necessary slope, earth will have to be filled in near the house if the lot is a comparatively level one. Wherever there has been an excavation made for the house-walls or a cellar, there will generally be enough earth near the house to furnish all the filling needed in making the required slope. This soil, which is almost always hard, should be worked over until it is as fine and mellow as possible, for a good lawn cannot be made from a soil that is coarse and lumpy.

If the soil is not rich, it should be made so. I would advise the use of bonemeal in liberal quantity in preference to barn-yard fertilizer, because it never introduces the seeds of weeds into the lawn, as manure

from the stables is very sure to do. Coarse bonemeal, in the proportion of a half pound to each square yard, will give a soil of ordinary quality

strength enough to produce an excellent growth of grass.

After you have made the soil fine and mellow by working it thoroughly with hoe and rake,—adding the bonemeal the last time you go over it,—level it as evenly as possible, beginning at the house and working towards the front and sides of the lot. If some portions of it seem less firm under foot than others, beat them down until the entire surface seems alike in this respect. If this is not done it will settle unevenly.

It is very important that a good quality of lawn-grass seed should be used. You cannot secure a deep, thick, velvety sward by the use of ordinary grass-seed. There are many kinds of lawn-grass "mixtures" on the market. Nearly all kinds sold by dealers of established reputation are good. These "mixtures" are greatly preferable to any selection the amateur gardener can make, because they are composed of the seeds of such grasses as are best adapted to the production of a good sward. They have been chosen for this purpose by men who have made a study of lawn-making, and we can depend on them to do all that is claimed for them if we do our part of the work well. The price asked for the best kinds of lawn-grass seeds may tempt some to substitute a cheaper article which ignorant or unscrupulous dealers may claim to be as good as the best, but whoever does this will be making a mistake. The best is the cheapest.

It will be seen, in reading the catalogues of the seedsmen, that a thick sowing is advised. Some persons have told me that they believed this to be advice given with a view to selling a larger quantity of seed, and they have accordingly ignored it and bought a smaller quantity than was advised. The result is invariably unsatisfactory. You will be obliged to wait one or two years for a good sward if you sow your lawn thinly, but thick sowing will give you a very satisfactory sward the first year, and a thick, deep one the second season. The extra amount of money required for thick sowing will be found well invested.

The proper time for sowing the seed is on a still, rather damp day. If a brisk wind is blowing the seed will be scattered where you do not want it to go. Even a slight breeze will carry it quite a distance, and the variations of the wind at sowing-time will be shown on the lawn by thick grass here and thin grass there, thus giving a spotted effect which can only be remedied by a second sowing on the places where the grass is thin. In a still day, and a damp one, when the air is rather heavy, the seed can be scattered with a reasonable degree of evenness by the amateur gardener. It is a good plan to sow across from north to south, and cross-sow from east to west. In this way you are pretty sure to miss no part of the ground. As a general thing the seed will germinate in

four or five days, and in a week the soil will show a film of green over its entire surface. A month later the soil will be quite hidden by the grass. Then you can form an opinion of what your lawn will be when the sward is fully established on it. It will take it all of one season to thicken up and "stool out," but while it is doing this it will afford a vast amount of pleasure to the maker and his family. No lawn is at its best before the second or third year.

Most amateur lawn-makers are sorely tempted to make use of the lawn-mower before the newly seeded lawn is ready for it. I would earnestly advise waiting until the grass gets to be at least four or five inches tall before beginning to clip it. It should be allowed to get such a start that mowing off the top of it will not interfere with root-action sufficiently to injure it. Do not cut it close at first. About all that should be done in the early stages of mowing a newly made lawn is to clip off the blades of grass, leaving the crown of each plant untouched. Later, when the stooling-out process has taken place, you can set the mower-knives to cut lower without any risk to the health of the plants, and the result will be a sward that looks and feels like velvet. A lawn with such a sward is good for years if proper care is taken of it. But never shave it, as many do, thus destroying the greatest charm of it. If you cut it too close, it will take on a rusty, brown look from the dead grass-leaves which are always to be found at the bottom of the sward. There should always be grass enough left standing to hide this collection of débris, which cannot be prevented from accumulating. If the season is a rather wet one, it may be necessary to use the lawn-mower three times a week, but in an ordinary season twice a week will be quite enough. Never allow the grass to get the start of you if you want your lawn to have the attractiveness every well-kept lawn ought to possess, for it will be found impossible to cut it smoothly with the ordinary lawn-mower, when it has been neglected for several days. The way to keep it looking well is to give it regular and careful attention.

The question will probably suggest itself, What is meant by the term "proper care" in addition to the mowing and raking of the lawn? It consists in keeping the soil well supplied with nutriment, sufficient to meet all the demands of the grasses of which the sward is composed. The idea seems to prevail that grass will grow anywhere and under all conditions—that all one has to do, in fact, is to give it a chance to get a start, and thereafter it will take care of itself. Such is not the case, however. It is true that it will live indefinitely, but it will not be a satisfactory existence to the owner of the lawn. It will take on a pinched, starved look after a little, utterly at variance with one's idea of the ideal lawn. Grass, like all other plants, exhausts the nutrifying elements of the soil, and unless more nutriment is supplied there will be a constant deterioration in the quality of the sward. The secret of

a successful lawn—the thing of beauty which may be made a joy as its wants are given attention—consists in feeding well the various grasses of which its sward is composed. Every lawn should be treated to a good top-dressing of lawn-fertilizer in spring and again in August. These two applications of fertilizer will keep the grass in good health and make it vigorous and luxuriant year after year. In these days of scientifically prepared fertilizers it is an easy matter to procure one especially adapted to the requirements of the lawn at a cost but slightly exceeding that of ordinary barn-yard manure to those living in city or village. This fertilizer is composed of various elements of plant-growth so proportioned that most satisfactory results are sure to follow its use.

11.

FLOWER-BEDS.

I WOULD find a place for the flower-beds at one side of the house, if possible, and well back towards the rear, thus carrying the suggestion of isolation between house and street to the farthest possible limit. locating the flower-beds in front of the house we are quite sure to convey the impression that we put them there for the admiration of the passer-by rather than the enjoyment of the family. Such ought not to be the case. The flower-bed ought to be where it will afford most pleasure to the household. If the conditions which prevail would not allow me to place them well towards the rear of the grounds, I would have them near the house,-along the walls of it, in fact,-thus keeping the lawn intact by preventing any infringement on its dignity. The beds near the house should be reserved for annuals and low-growing perennial plants as a general thing, though tall-growing sorts can often be planted in nooks and corners and against a wide space of windowless wall with fine effect. I would not advise using the two classes together to a great extent, however. Give the hardy plants a place of their own, where they can receive the care they require, which is quite different from that required by the annuals.

In the beds given over to annuals, during the summer, bulbs can be grown to excellent advantage. These should be near the house, where their beauty can be enjoyed by its occupants without their being obliged to go out-of-doors to pay them a visit. The plants will have completed their flowering before the time comes to plant annuals among them. This can be done without disturbing them, if one is careful in stirring the soil for the reception of seed. It will not be necessary to go down into the soil with rake or hoe deep enough to reach the bulb. Leave the foliage untouched, as it is quite necessary that it should remain until the bulb has completed its annual growth, which takes place immediately after flowering. As soon as the growing period is over, this

foliage will ripen and fall off, and there will be no disfigurement of the bed from it.

No garden should be without its collection of bulbs. By the use of this class of most brilliant and beautiful flowers we can extend the season of bloom at least a month, thus brightening and seemingly shortening what would otherwise be a rather dismal, cheerless interval between the going of the snow and the coming of the earlier borderflowers. They like a deep, rich, mellow soil of loam and sand, and this soil also suits most annuals well. They should be planted in the fall. Late September and early October is the best time to do this work, as it can be done leisurely, therefore is likely to be well done. It is also to the advantage of the bulbs that it be done before cold weather sets in. as this enables them to become well established before the ground freezes. If planted late, much of this work on their part will have to be done in spring, at a time when all the energies of the plant ought to be concentrated in the production of flowers. By all means have some hyacinths and tulips and daffodils, with clumps of crocus and snowdrop, to usher in the spring before winter seems to have really taken its departure. Bulbs cost but little in dollars and cents, and they require but little attention, but they afford a wonderful amount of pleasure. Coming, as they do, so far in advance of all other garden-flowers, we appreciate them more than almost anything else we can grow in the garden.

The best annuals for the amateur gardener to grow are those whose merits have been fully proved by long years of cultivation. These, for the most part, are sturdy, self-reliant kinds, which give large returns in bloom for a small amount of care. Among the best annuals for the amateur I would name the following: Phlox Drummondii, sweet peas, petunias, asters, ten-week stock, calliopsis, balsam, morning-glory, mignonette, and sweet alyssum. All these, with the exception of the aster and stock, will come into bloom quite early in the season, and continue to produce an abundance of flowers until frost comes if they are kept from ripening seed. I would advise sowing the seeds of these flowers in the beds where they are to remain during the summer, between the first and the middle of May at the North. In the latitude of Washington they can be sown a fortnight earlier. The amateur gardener is not successful, as a general thing, in his or her attempt to gain a month or six weeks by starting plants into early growth in the living-There the conditions are all against a healthy and vigorous growth of seedling plants. Instead of gaining by early sowing we are pretty sure to lose by it, as house-grown plants are almost always so lacking in vitality that they suffer by transplanting to the open ground. Plants from seed sown at that time will generally come into bloom before the early-started plants become strong and well established.

In addition to the annuals named above I would advise the liberal use of pansies, which can be grown from seed for late flowering, or from plants bought from the florist for spring blooming, also of tearoses, which seldom outgrow the limits of the annual-plant bed. By the judicious cutting-back of such branches as have borne flowers from time to time during the season, in order to encourage new growth, they can be made to bloom throughout the entire summer and late into the fall. No flower is more beautiful or more fragrant than those of this class of roses.

I would plant hardy perennials along the sides of the home lot. Here they will hide the fence, should there be one, and afford a background against which the beauty of the lawn will be strongly emphasized. Here I would also plant such hardy shrubs as deserve a place on the small lawn, grouping those of similar habit, and scattering tall, strong growers among the border plants. If the owners of adjoining lots can work in harmony, very pleasing effects can be secured by this style of planting. To secure the best results low-growing plants should be given a place next to the street, gradually increasing the height of the border as it recedes, thus bringing the tallest plants at the sides of the house and well to the rear. In this way we form a sort of background against which to view the entire lawn and house. The general effect will be found very satisfactory.

For groups of shrubbery we have no finer plants than the spiræas and the hydrangea. When planted singly they are never so charming as when massed together, thus producing a strong effect. Our best hardy large shrub is the lilac. Every yard ought to have three or four of its best varieties. If I could have but one shrub it should be this. Syringias, weigelias, and halesias are excellent shrubs, of very easy culture. Bear in mind that a few shrubs, well grown, are much more satisfactory than a large number of inferior ones. Also do not overlook the fact that small grounds cannot accommodate many large plants, such as most shrubs will become in a few years. Therefore, to avoid overcrowding, plant sparingly, and allow for future development. When a shrub loses its individuality in this manner its beauty and usefulness are at an end.

Roses of the hardier class, of which all gardens should have a good collection, can be grown to better advantage if planted by themselves. There they can be given the treatment they require without interference from other shrubs. They are somewhat exclusive in their tendencies, and always seem to resent any attempt on our part to make them grow among less aristocratic plants. They are never able to forget their royal lineage, and demand the best places and the most attention. But we forgive them their exactions because of their beauty, and are always glad to do their bidding. A garden without its roses is not living up to its privileges.

The busy gardener—that is, the gardener who is occupied during the greater part of the day with business or household duties-will find hardy perennial plants more satisfactory, all things considered, than any others. They require the least care. Once established, they are good for years. Some begin to bloom quite early in the season. Others bloom in midsummer, and some are in their prime when frost comes. Nearly all of them are profuse bloomers, and most of them are extremely brilliant in color. For early flowering I would advise the dicentra, the peony, and the lily of the valley. A little later the herbaceous spiræas will appear upon the scene, followed by the larkspurs and the earlier phloxes. Then comes the hollyhock—perhaps the most attractive of all our hardy plants-and the new rudbeckia, which is the most brilliant of all plants when in the prime of its golden glory, and the late varieties of phlox will prolong the dazzling pageant of late autumn's splendor until the withering touch of the frost is laid upon everything in the garden.

Shrubs and perennials can be planted in fall or in spring. If fall-planting is most convenient, do it as soon after the foliage has ripened as possible. Early fall planting allows the plant to become somewhat established before winter sets in. Spring planting should not be attempted until the ground is in good condition for working. Allow the surplus moisture to drain away from it before you stir it. You cannot set out plants satisfactorily in a soil heavy with water. At the North, the ground is not in proper condition for this work before the last of

April, as a general thing.

In planting the border avoid straight lines and all formality. Let it curve gracefully next the lawn. Where it is widest, plant your groups of shrubs and such tall plants as the hollyhock, the rudbeckia, and the larkspur. Give the lower growers, like dicentra, coreopsis, and the dwarf phloxes, a place in the foreground. If you know your plants,as every gardener ought to,-it will be an easy matter to so group and combine them that none of the smaller ones are hidden by the larger ones. It will also be an easy matter to get harmonizing colors together. In order to make sure of this, if you are not familiar with what you plant, study the catalogues of the florists well. These generally give height, color, and season of bloom, and if you are governed by this information, you need make but few mistakes in planting. Whatever mistakes you make this year can be rectified next year. The gardener who loves his work will always study effects and plan changes by which improvements can be made, and year by year the home-grounds will take on additional beauty. The making of a fine garden is, like the construction of a lawn, an evolutionary process, and the work required by it cannot, in the very nature of things, be done in one year or in two. This is one of the charms of gardening. What we do this season

suggests something new for next season. There is always novelty and variety about it.

I have named but few kinds among the long list of annuals, perennials, and shrubs. I have confined mention to those which I know from personal experience to be most satisfactory in the hands of the amateur gardener. I would not advise going outside this list until experience justifies its extension. When one has grown hardy plants successfully—and not till then—he may safely undertake the cultivation of kinds which are more exacting in their requirements. The amateur who confines himself or herself to a small list of strong and robust plants at the beginning, gives evidence of possessing a wisdom which will lead

to better things by-and-bye.

To grow either annuals or hardy perennials well, grass and weeds must be kept from encroaching upon their domain. Among the annuals one will have to do more or less hand-weeding while they are small. This is rather hard, unpleasant work, but it is work which must be done if you would grow good flowers. Most of this work has to be done during the early part of the season, when the flowering plants are getting a start. If it is done thoroughly then, there will not be much weeding to be done after July. In the border the hoe can be made to do what the hand has to do among the annuals, thus greatly lightening the labor. Keep the soil stirred well about all the plants and fertilize it well. Good flowers cannot be grown in a poor soil. The fertilizer advised for use on the lawn is a good one for general purposes. Worked into the soil of the beds where annuals are grown, it produces a strong, healthy growth of foliage and flowers. Each spring it should be used liberally in the border. Scatter a handful of it about each plant, and then dig it into the soil well with hoe or trowel. The shrubs should be treated to an application of it also, in order to bring about a luxuriant development. While there are many good fertilizers on the market, I know of nothing better, in a general way, than coarsely ground bonemeal. The finely ground article brings about more immediate results, but the good effects of it are not so lasting.

Perennials grown from seed will not bloom until the second season, therefore those desiring bloom the first season from this class of plants will have to purchase plants from the florist. A collection of hardy perennials gives larger returns for labor and time expended on them than any other class of plants the amateur can grow. For those who have but little leisure to devote to gardening I would advise the use of them exclusively. A small bed of annuals will require more care than a large collection of perennials. But I would advise the cultivation of both classes, for each has its peculiar charm. The gardener who grows plants because he loves them will not be satisfied unless his garden con-

tains some of all kinds.

PLACE AUX DAMES; OR, THE LADIES SPEAK AT LAST.

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Room by candle-light; tea-things on the table; Juliet discovered reading.

JULIET [yawns]. Where on earth is Romeo? It's a sin and a shame, the way he goes on! He pays no more regard to mealtime than a doctor's gig; and he makes such a fuss if his food is not done just to suit him! Heigh-ho! Here I am buried alive for the second time, and just as much forgotten as if I had died when I took that overdose of morphine. Why, only the other day, when I was calling on old Mrs. Lear, I heard her scream from one end of the house to the other, "Mrs. R. Montague? Mrs. R. Montague? Who the devil's Mrs. R. Montague? Is it the woman who coddles chimney-sweeps?" No wonder her husband thought a low soft voice an excellent thing in woman.

Oh dear! If my pa and Romeo's would only forgive us and let us go back to Verona! I am so sick of being cooped up in this poky little water-cure establishment, living on next to nothing, and in—in a room without a balcony! And I could have had one, too, only Romeo was so unkind: he said I was much too good at that sort of thing, and that I had tried that once too often already. And when I told him that he, at any rate, ought not to reproach me with it, he

said, on the contrary, he was just the one who should.

Ah! how well I remember that night at home, when I sat looking at the moon, thinking, like the love-sick little goosey that I was, of him! and heard his soft voice wafted up amid the fragrance of orangeblossoms: "I would I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek." His remarks about my hands now, in connection with the price of gloves, are not quite so flattering. And then he cried, "By yonder moon I swear," and I interrupted him with, "Oh, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon!" only I should have added, "Or by the sun and stars, or the whole universe," if I had known how extremely addicted he was to that style of conversation. Then I asked him softly if he loved me—just threw myself at his head, he says; but I didn't at all; and if I had, 'twould have served him right for jumping over pa's wall. Oh, if we had only kept a dog! Hark! there's Romeo's step! Let me hide my novel: it makes him so angry to see me read a novel. He says that a woman's first duty in life should be to make her husband comfortable, and that instead of cursing and swearing about love, she had better take off his boots. No; there, it's past! And it's not Romeo, after all: it must be that poor crazy loon

of a Dane who came here with his wishy-washy little wife to recover his mind. Though how he is going to recover what he never had, I don't see.—Oh, here comes Portia.——

Enter PORTIA.

Is that you, Mrs. Bassanio?

Portia. Ergo est ego—it is I! How poor that language is which to denote so great a thing employs so weak a word, it is I!

Jul. Language is a snare and a delusion, as I have found to my cost, Mrs. B.

Por. Qui tam—what of that? Because one has been weak, shall none be strong? Because one missed the right, shall all do wrong? No! no! The purity of language is not stained: it droppeth as the gentle rain—

Jul. If you knew my Romeo, you'd say it dropped very much more like hail.

Por. Durante vita—do not interrupt. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes—

Jul. That's true enough: at least that's the indiscriminate way in which blessings are showered on me.

Por. Mala causa silenda est—why cannot you be silent? 'Tis mightiest in the mighty: it becomes the learned lawyer better than his gown. His language shows the force of legal power, the attributes of law and equity, wherein doth sit the fear and dread of knaves. Therefore, Jew—

Jul. [starting up]. I'm not a Jew: the Capulets have not a drop of Jewish blood in their veins.

Por. Pshaw! I did not say Jew.

Jul. Yes, you did; and you looked at me as if I were the concentrated essence of all the lost tribes.

Por. Nugæ canoræ—silly creature! Don't you understand? It was a slip of the tongue: I meant to say you. Therefore you, if the language be your plea, consider this——

Jul. By the bye, Portia, talking of Jews, what became of your old friend Shylock? Did you ever see him after you got the better of him that day in court?

Por. Did I ever see him? Oh, Juliet, Juliet, that wretched Israelite is a skeleton in my closet!

Jul. A skeleton! Is he dead?

Por. Dead! No. Fieri facias—a figure of speech! Lineal descendant of Methuselah, he is as invulnerable as his wandering prototype.

Jul. But what of that? Surely he cannot harm you—you, the rich heiress of Belmont?

Por. Alas! Ex post facto—I am such no more. Listen, Juliet. You know the story of my wretched courtship?

Jul. Wretched! You call your courtship wretched, when you had your own way from beginning to end? Why, I always fancied it the acme of amatory blessedness.

Por. It was a slave-auction, neither more nor less, in which I—I was knocked down to not the highest, but the slyest bidder. It was a miserable swindle from beginning to end. Nerissa winked at him.

Jul. Winked at him?

Por. He bribed her to wink at him when he should take up the right casket.

Jul. But so clever a lawyer as you, Portia, should have discovered the cheat.

Per. I do not require a little chit like you to tell me what I should and should not have done.

Jul. The truth is, Portia, you couldn't fall in love like any one else, but had to try some new and startling way of doing it, and so you overreached yourself.

Por. Had I been bold and forward enough to try it as you did at your age, Mrs. Montague, I should have been whipped and sent to bed.

Jul. I think such treatment would not have come amiss to you at any age, Mrs. B.

Por. I scorn you, Mrs. Montague: I consider you beneath contempt. [Voice heard calling outside, "Juliet! Juliet!"]

Jul. O wise and upright judge! ["Juliet!"]—Yes, yes, Romeo, I'm coming. ["Juliet!"]

Por. Begone, lest I wither you with the lightning of the law. ["Juliet! Juliet!"]

Jul. A Daniel come to judgment! A Daniel! I thank thee, Jew, for giving me that word! ["Juliet! Juliet!"]—Yes, yes, Romeo: do be quiet. No wonder that poor apothecary said, "Who calls so loud?" ["Juliet!"]

Por. [mockingly]. How silver sweet sound husbands' tongues by night! Don't they, Mrs. Montague?

Jul. O wise and upright judge! how much more older art thou than thou lookest! ["Juliet!"]—Oh, Romeo, do be quiet: I'm coming. ["Juliet! Juliet!"] [She runs off.]

Por. In good time, poor fool, else wouldst thou wish thy dear love had a glove upon his hand.—Pshaw! Out upon the silly, trifling fool! I will not thus be moved. Bos, bovis—business before pleasure. First, this note to Bassanio [sits]—Bassanio, my husband! What does not his name conjure up? Once more I see myself at Belmont, my old ancestral home: once more I am the proud, haughty, long-wooed heiress. Suitor after suitor advances: "Even the watery kingdom, whose

ambitious head spits in the face of heaven, is no bar to stop the foreign spirits, but they come, as o'er a brook, to see fair Portia." The Prince of Arragon has failed, the Prince of Morocco has withdrawn, and lo! another form advances. It is Bassanio. What did I see in him to fall in love with? For that is just what I did do. I said,

"I pray you, tarry; pause a day or two,
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore forbear a while.
There's something tells me (but it is not love)
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality."

But he, all haste to choose, would venture then at once; and no wonder, considering how terribly in debt he was. Trembling with hope and eagerness, I said,

"Away, then! I am locked in one of them: If you do love me, you will find me out.

Go, Hercules!

Live thou, I live: with much, much more dismay I view the fight than thou that makest the fray."

Then he chose. Rightly, of course. Oh, that perfidious Nerissa! And my easy-going, good-natured husband actually laughs about it now, and thinks it a capital joke-says, "Come, old girl! all's fair in love and war." How little I suspected it when he turned with his handsome face and glorious smile awaiting my confirmation of his choice! Proud as a queen, I said, "You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand, such as I am: though for myself alone I would not be ambitious in my wish, to wish myself much better; yet for you I would be trebled twenty times myself; a thousand times more fair; ten thousand times more rich. But now I was the lord of this fair mansion, master of my servants, queen o'er myself; and even now, but now, this house, these servants and this same myself, are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring." That ring! It was gone before night: he gave it to Antonio-Antonio, who quietly settled down upon us and devoured our substance. Amicus curiæ-save me from my friends! for this is what my husband's friend has brought us to. No sooner does he appear than I hear the ominous "I say, old fellow, can you lend me a thousand ducats?" followed by the inevitable "Oh, certainly, certainly! I haven't got it about me, but I've no doubt I can raise it." Of course he hasn't got it about him: there isn't a brigand in all Italy who would take the trouble to stop him. He has never so much as a florin in his pocket: he has always just lent the last to a friend. And so, between borrowing and lending, mortgaging and selling, we soon found ourselves penniless; for of course a man who would borrow three thousand ducats from a friend to get married on would rapidly make ducks

and drakes of his wife's property. But oh this note from Shylock! I had forgotten it. [Sits.] Let him who seeks to outwit a Jew guard him at every point. For this did I learn law, for this did I procure Antonio's release! A fatal mistake it was, and when to all appearance baffled, extinguished, what did I behold but that ubiquitous Israelite arise master of Belmont and arbiter of my destiny! He had quietly bought up every one of my husband's notes, and sold us out of house and home. But what can he be writing to Bassanio about? [Reads.] "Belmont"—it is dated Belmont—"Dog of a Christian! That thou dost still need moneys is doubtless to thine own satisfaction, but thy learned wife should tell thee that when thou hast no security thou canst not borrow. For thine offer of a pound of flesh with the blood, thou hast forgot we are forbidden even to touch swine. Shylock."—Oh, Bassanio, Bassanio! how could you? Oh how dreadful! But, hark! some one is coming: I must conceal my indignation.—

Enter OPHELIA.

Well, child, how are you?

Ophelia. Very well, I thank you. I came to get a cup of tea.

Por. Tea? I had forgotten. [They sit at table.] So you are too a devotee at the shrine of hydropathy?

Oph. Oh, no! I tried the cold-water treatment once, and nearly died of it. Are you undergoing it?

Por. Not for myself: we are sojourning here for the benefit of my husband's friend Antonio, who is the victim of an alarming corpulency.

Oph. Does his too, too sordid flesh melt, as Ham says?

Por. Very little. Ah, how gladly would he now part with a hundred pounds of that of which he was so unwilling to lose one! But viam mundam—it is the way of the world.

Oph. That's just what Ham says.

Por. Ah, indeed! About what?

Oph. Everything! Ham takes a very gloomy view of life in general.

Por. Yes, I always noticed a slight shade of melancholy in his conversation.

Oph. And he used to be so gay!—quite the Sydney Smith of Denmark. [Sings.]

Why are you doleful, doleful Hamlet? Why, why are you always so blue? Could you not cheer up a little, Hamlet? Oh, Ham, if you can smile, pray do.

Why have you taken to tombstones, Hamlet?
Why don't you try polo instead?
You know it was moping out there in the graveyard
You caught that bad cold in your head.

I know you are tired of groaning, Hamlet,
And weary of tear and sigh;
So do make an effort, I beg you, Hamlet,
To shake off your gloom and be spry.

But he has never been quite the same since the murders.

Por. The murders! What murders? The idea of saying the murders, as calmly as I would "the sneezes"!

Oph. Oh, we got so used to them. There was—let me see [counting on her fingers]—Ham's grandfather, his father, his uncle, his mother, his great-grandmother: that's five; and my grandmother, my father, my brother, my great-aunt—nine. There was a tenth somewhere. Let me count over: Ham's—

Por. Oh, no, no: I can't stand it! Who was the vile perpetrator?

Oph. [slowly]. Ham says-

Por. [vehemently]. Who did it?

Oph. Ham says that is a question futurity alone will solve; and then again he says their fates are wrapt in gloom.

Por. [shuddering]. I should think they were; but how you can talk so calmly about it passes my comprehension. [Looks at her watch.] Good gracious! I had no idea it was so late. I am going to take a moonlight drive with my old suitor, the Prince of Morocco. Heigh-ho! He is always talking about the beautiful jewels his wife is to have. I sometimes think he knows all mine are pawned, and does it to spite me. Oh, to think that I was a lawyer, and the property all mine, and that I did not make any settlements! [Exit.

Oph. Ham says—Oh, she's gone! Well, she needn't have been in such a hurry. Ham says, "Assume a virtue if you have it not." Now for my tea. [Sits.] Where's the sugar? Oh, here it is! Sweets to the sweet, as Ham says when he is in a good humor. I do hope this water-cure is going to do Ham good. He certainly was in an awful state when we left Elsinore, and those stupid old Danish doctors never found out what the matter was. They never thought it worth while to ask my opinion about it. I could have told them what the trouble was. We didn't have all those empty bottles lying about the house for nothing. I wish they could hear some of his cheerful little soliloquies when he fancies himself alone—discussing whether it is best to be or not to be. I don't know which he generally decides upon, and I don't see that it makes much difference. Then he loves philosophy, he says, and thinks that the mistake Plato and Aristotle and all those great philosophers have made was not writing in verse. So he does it, and makes me learn it by heart, so as to hear how it sounds at a distance. This is his last poem—a fragment, as he calls it:

Why? wherefore thus? and whence should it be so? Oh, what forbodes the mood the mind must knew? But if 'tis thus, and yet not wholly told, What of the new, the finite, and the old? Complete, yet never measured, all and each: Then tell him what the rules the thought must teach, And whence the syllogistic meaning high Which leaves, and stays, and, pausing, passes by, Downward for e'er, nor upward ever more. How desperately dark the need to soar, While whispers pass, and silence creeps along, And reason, sobbing, smiles on righteous wrong!

I am very fond of Ham, very, but there are times when he is a trying person to live with. For instance, he considers himself cleverer than I, and that's a chord he is fond of harping on till it becomes like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh, as he expresses it; and if I open my eyes a little, he curls his lip scornfully and says, "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, Ophelia." And if I tell him some simple piece of news about the fashions or our neighbors—anything that seems a little strange to me-he remarks indifferently, "Seems, madame? Nay, it is: I know not seems." For instance, when I told him that hoop-skirts were going out, and thought it would be a pleasant surprise, knowing how he hates them, he only shrugged his shoulders and said, "Oh, what a falling off is there! Be somewhat scantier of thy maiden presence then." [Sits.] So, what with his playing very badly on the flute, and wanting me to keep a horrid skull on my dressing-table, I do have my trials.—What's that? Oh, it's my Lady Macbeth. I don't know how it is, but I really am getting quite nervous with all Ham's dreadful talk, and the awful way he has of seeing ghosts over one's shoulder, and wanting to include them in the conversation.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

[Rises.] Good-evening, my lady!

Lady Macbeth. Here, sweet Ophelia? I too seek "the cup that cheers, but no inebriates," as a Sassenach poet has it. Sit doon, lassie, sit doon. [Sits.] My guidman is wi' thine, and I left them discoorsing anent speerits and bogies, and a' the uncanny things they could conjure up.

Oph. Oh dear! I wish Ham wouldn't! He'll talk about them to me all night—"To harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood, make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres, thy knotted and combined locks to part, and each particular hair to stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine," as he pleasantly remarks when I ask him why he tells me such dreadful things.

Lady Mac. Eh! but the laddie must be clean daft. But I sympa-

thize wi' ye, my dear. I'm the veriest old coward in the world, and I could not go to my ain room just now, for it's no more than a bedlam wi' that howling blackamoor next door.

Oph. Oh, you mean Othello.

Lady Mac. Indeed I do. He sits there shouting negro melodies mornin', noon, and night.

Oph. Ham says the times are out of tune, and that Othello is a jig-maker.

Lady Mac. Weel, that's no what I should ca' him mysel', forbye he may seem like ane to your Hamish.

Oph. Hamish! My husband's name is not Hamish. I would not have married a man named Hamish.

Lady Mac. Weel, my dear, it's as gude a name as ony in Auld Reekie; so it maun be better than ony in Danemark. The name has been weel kenned in my ain family besides. There were Hamish Mackay, and my mother's great-uncle, Hamish Macgoyle, and my sister-in-law's second cousin, Hamish Macduff, and Hamish——

Oph. Oh yes, but these are abstracts and brief chronicles of the time, as Ham says. Forgive me for interrupting you, but sha'n't I pour you out a cup of tea?

Lady Mac. True, true, I had forgotten it. [They sit.] Does your Ham no drink tea?

Oph. No: he calls it weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable.

Lady Mac. Bless the chiel! When he says a thing he means it. Oh that Macbeth were loike him! My guidman is a sair guid man, but, between ourselves, sweet Ophelia, he's a little in the sere and yellow leaf, and mickle easy to be blown about.

Oph. Yes, a king of shreds and patches, as Ham says.

Lady Mac. Eh! out upon you! You and Ham are sair impudent, and, by the bluid of the Macfifes, I'll no put up with it!

Oph. Oh dear! What did I say? Ham's always telling me I outherod Herod, but indeed I did not mean to.

Lady Mac. Weel, weel! say nae mair about it. Ye're a silly chiel, and that's the truth; but I'm a gude-tempered auld body, in spite o' a' the awfu' stories have been told about me.

Oph. About you! Oh, surely, it's the very coinage of your brain, as Ham says.

Enter JULIET.

Jul. Oh dear! what a tempest Romeo was in! My bosom's lord certainly did not sit lightly on his throne to-night.—Oh, dear Ophelia, what an age since we met! Kiss me, sweet.

Lady Mac. [pulling Ophelia's sleeve]. Introduce me, my dear.

Oph. Lady Macbeth of Dunblane Castle, Scotland—Mrs. Romeo Montague of Verona.

Jul. What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet or be as surrounded with thorns.

Oph. Yes, or, as Ham says,

"Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay, Might stop a hole to keep the wind away."

Jul. Oh, you dear, delicious little mousie! I wonder if you ever know what you are talking about?

Lady Mac. Just what I was wondering of you both, my dears.

Jul. Ha! ha! Well, however wild my own remarks may be, they do not partake of the nature of sandwiches.

Lady Mac. Sandwiches!

Jul. Yes—bread and butter interspersed with thick layers of Ham. Oph. A hit, a very palpable hit, as Ham says; but I don't care. If you had as clever a husband as mine, you'd quote him too.

Enter Portia, hurriedly.

Por. It's too much—much too much. Zonam perdidit!—zounds and perdition!

Lady Mac. Mrs. Bassanio, you forget yoursel' and us.

Por. Oh, don't be alarmed. I mention no names: my language is not actionable.

Lady Mac. But it's very objectionable, allow me to say.

Por. Shake not your gory locks at me, Lady Macbeth. You would be a trifle annoyed too if you received such a note as this from your husband, and he had the effrontery to send it on a card, without an envelope, by the Prince of Morocco. And I saw by the little smile His Moorish Highness gave when he handed it that he had read it—the beast! the prig! And I was so mad with him that I wouldn't drive with him; and now he's gone.

Lady Mac. Weel, never mind, dear. What does you husband say? Perhaps he's in trouble.

Por. In trouble! Of course he's in trouble. Was there ever the day when he wasn't in trouble? Just listen to this: [Reads.] "Dearest Chuck: Antonio and I have been playing rather high at loo, and have been obliged to go to—go to—to Baden." To Baden! Why should they go to Baden, I should like to know! Why, it's at the other end of the earth, and I shall never see my Bassanio again! [Weeps.]

Jul. [taking the card]. There must be some mistake: "Dearest Chuck: Antonio and I have been playing rather high at loo, and have been obliged to go—to—to bed in despair, as our clothes have all been seized by our landlord."

Por. [seizes the card and reads]. "Fly to our rescue, as of old, with fifty pounds, and be sure to bring my garnet studs, as the others are gone with the shirt. Thy captive sweetheart, Bassanio.—P. S. If you

can find an old set of studs for Antonio, bring them too." Oh how dreadful! Did any one ever have such a husband? No wonder His Highness smiled.

Jul. My dear, comfort yourself. Bassanio is nothing to Romeo. How I wish I could meet with such a piece of good luck! My captive lord would wait a long time before I bailed him out of that bed.

Lady Mac. Never mind, my dear: we all have our trials. The best of husbands is apt at times to be a brute; and so lang as ye keep out of Will Shakespeare's hands, I think it matters little what the Prince of Morocco says.

Por. Will Shakespeare? Who is he? and what can he have to do with me?

Jul. Oh do tell us! and will he have anything to do with me? And is he fond of moonlight? Is he coming here?

Oph. Does he knit—

Jul. Oh, Ophelia, you'll be the death of me yet! What put that into your head? Does he backstitch?

Oph. I was going to say, "Does he knit his brows?" when you interrupted me. I love to see a man knit his brows.

Por. But tell us all about this Shakespeare, Lady Macbeth.

Lady Mac. It is the mon, my dears, that has written a' the vile slanders aboot me.

All. About you?

Lady Mac. Yes. He is a pettifogging young scamp wha just gaes about poking his nose into people's most private affairs, finds out about them fra servants and sic-like, and writes all the dreadful stories he hears into juggles or plays.

Oph. Dear me! how odd!

Lady Mac. It's a bad business altogether, my dears. Last summer he war in Scotland, stopping at a sma' inn that lies between the castle and Birnam Wood. I had gaen to a bit of a ba' gi'en by my Lady Macduff—one of the Macduffs of Gower, relations o' the Macphersons and the Macblanes—but my lord war waiting at The Three Witches, as the inn is ca'd, for a letter from puir Billie Duncan, that shot himself afterward looking down the muzzle of his gun. There o' night cam young Shakespeare, and offers to my lord, whom he didna ken at all, a drink for every bit of news of the great folk at the castle. My lord was delighted with the joke, but he soon becam' muddled, and there's nae telling what he didna say, for I hear that in the morning the young man left in high speerits.

Jul. But did you ever see what he wrote?

Oph. Yes, as Ham says, unfold thy tale. Did you see it?

Lady Mac. See it, my dears! I should think I did. I could scarcely sleep for a week at the account of my ain doings. I can see

mysel' noo cooming down the great ha' of the castle wi' a candle in my hand, crying, "Out damned spot! out, I say!-One, two: why, then 'tis time to do it.—Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeared? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have so much blood in him?"

Oph. Angels and ministers of grace defend us! as Ham says.

Jul. Well, I shall never sit on a balcony alone after this.

Lady Mac. And then I gae on wi' "The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?" Whilk, ye ken, war the veriest nonsense for my ainsel' to ask.

Por. Not at all. Many cases of the same kind have occurred. They are generally called lapsus lingua, or cases of lapsed identity.

Lady Mac. "What! will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more of that, my lord, no more: you mar all with this starting." Whilk, I'm sure, ony ane might ha' done wi' sma' blame to him.

Jul. How perfectly awful! I feel as cold as ice.

Oph. Yes, all hugger-mugger, as Ham's poor uncle used to say.

Lady Mac. "Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." Whilk is the greatest nonsense of a', for I have never used ony but Rob Roy's ain tar soap, and that would ha' done the business in a twinkling.

Oph. Why, yes, 'twould be as easy as lying, as Ham says.

Jul. Well, if those are the sentiments of your husband, Ophelia, all I can say is-

Por. These interruptions are unseemly.

Lady Mac. And then continues wi' gibberish sic as this:

"Methought I heard a voice cry, 'Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep, the innocent sleep, Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care, The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath, Balm of hurt minds, great Nature's second course, Chief nourisher in life's feast."

Oph. Well, proceed, as Ham says.

Lady Mac. "Still it cried, 'Sleep no more!' to all the house:

'Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor Shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no more."

Forbye it mocht have added, "Malcolm and Donald and Hay and Macnulty, and a' the rest of the household, baith male and female;" for when my guidman did begin to snore there war nae mair rest for onybody.

Jul. What is it all about?

Lady Mac. Murder, my dear-the vilest, blackest murder, wi' not a sax-pence worth o' gain for onybody.

Por. But does he dare accuse you of nisi prius—I would say, murder—in the first degree?

Lady Mac. Puir Macbeth's the cat's paw, but I get a' the credit o' the deed.

Jul. O flesh! flesh! how art thou falsified! as my Ham, commonly known as Romeo, says.

Oph. But I don't understand. Who killed who? Jul. Oh, they all fought one another

From the attic to the bats,
Till each had killed the other,
Like the Kilkenny cats.

Lady Mac. Mrs. Montague!

Por. But, dear Lady Macbeth, you have never explained what this young man has to do with me. Noli me tangere—he knows me not.

Oph. Yes, as Ham says, pluck out the heart of this mystery.

Lady Mac. My dears, ye hae a' heerd what this young man wrote o' me. I only wish to pit ye on your guard: the young man is here!

All. Here?

Jul. The wretch!—still, a man's a man, and from a balcony point of view may be worth cultivating. [Aside.]

Lady Mac. Here, collecting mateeriels for new plays. My lord's gilly saw him this mornin', and recognized him; and he has been a'ready questionin' the sairvants.

Por. Oh, the dreadful creature!

Oph. O cursed spite!

Jul. The designing villain!

Por. What will he say about me?

Oph. And me?

Jul. And me?

All. What shall we do?

Jul. Bribe him.

Oph. Drown him.

Por. Prosecute him.

Lady Mac. Let us send him a notice instantly to quit these premises. Stop! I have my note-book somewhere. [Goes to the table.] How shall we begin? "Sir!" [They all begin dictating together.]

Por. "Allow me to inform you that the ladies you have so maligned, and are about so to malign, do protest in toto, or teetotally, against such proceedings, and, far from being the defenceless and helpless creatures that you appear to consider them, are quite capable of defending themselves to the last gasp. Nemo repente fuit turpissimus—you will repent your temerity."

Jul. "Allow me to inform you that you are a horrid old screech-owl, for whom wringing your neck would be a long sight too good; and if

I tell my Romeo what you are up to, you had better have your head done up in cotton batting, as there is not a boot or shoe in the establishment that will not take its turn in whizzing at your empty old pate. If you do not consider this language forcible enough, allow me to inform you——"

Oph. "I will speak daggers to thee, but use none, as Ham says, and, as Ham also says, bring me to the test, and I the matter will reword, which madness would gambol from. Shakespeare, for love of grace, lay not such flattering unction to thy soul! For does not Ham further say, 'How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.' Therefore, sirrah——"

Lady Mac. Ladies! ladies! have pity on me! One at a time.

All. Read us what you have written.

Lady Mac. "Sir!"—I never caught another word except Ham.

Por. "Allow me to inform you that the ladies you have so maligned——"

Jul. "You are a horrid old screech-owl, for whom wringing your neck would be a long sight too good——"

Oph. "I will speak daggers to thee, but use none, as Ham says——"

Por. "They do protest in toto—that is, teetotally—against such proceedings, and, far from being defenceless creatures——"

Jul. "If I tell my Romeo what you are up to, you had better have your head done up in cotton batting, as there——"

Oph. "I the matter will reword, which madness would gambol from. Shakespeare, for love of grace——"

Por. "Are quite capable of defending themselves to the last gasp——"

Jul. "As there is not a boot or shoe that would not take its turn in whizzing by your empty old pate——"

Oph. "For, as Ham further says, 'We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us——'"

Por. "Nemo repente fuit turpissimus—you will repent your temerity."

Lady Mac. Well hear what I have written—I hope it is clear: "Sir! Allow me to inform you that you are a horrid old screech-owl, for whom wringing your neck would be a long sight too good. I will speak daggers to thee, but use none, as Ham says, so you had better have your head done up in cotton batting, as madness would gambol from Shakespeare. Incapable to the last gasp of a boot or a shoe whizzing by your empty old pate, you had better, as Ham further says, repeat your severity."—No, no, this will never do. I will write the protest my ainsel', and then you and a' the other ladies in the house can sign it. We will send it to the young man, and if he takes no notice, but gaes on maligning us in this dreadful way, we will print our own defence.

Jul. But stop! Suppose the ever-captious world Refuse to list the thunders we have hurled?

Por. Oh, when arrested in the name of law, They must attend—mutatis cases——

Jul. [interrupting]. Pshaw!

If we would seek the public's ear to win,

We must secure their favor—

Lady Mac. I'll begin.

Oph. No, no: let me. [To audience.]

If thus maligned I am

Report me and my cause aright——

Jul. [interrupting]. Says Ham.

But still th' advice is good, and to fulfill it—

Lady Mac. My dear, 'twould only scotch the snake, not kill it.

Stand boldly forth, give the young man the lie,
And still the worst that he can do defy.

If we've your favor now for all that's past,
We'll trust that favor when we speak at last.



BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Salons Colonial and Republican. By Anne H. Wharton. With Portraits.

By somewhat extending the period she has treated in former volumes, Miss Wharton carries us into the social life of the early days of the American Republic, of fresh and striking interest. She writes of A Colonial Salon, A Republican Court, A Great Social Leader, Social Life in the

Federal City, Literature and Art in the Republic, A Nineteenth Century Salon, A Ball and a Mystery.

Of the genesis of the salon she writes: "For some cause unknown to the mind of man, but better understood by those feminine processes that are said to take the place of the reasoning faculty in the other sex, it has always been the ambition and delight of a certain class of superior women to rule and shine in a social atmosphere somewhat different from that of the conventional ball and dinner." From this definition as a basis,—it is in fact the first paragraph of her book,-Miss Wharton rebuilds for our interested attention those gatherings through which walked the greatest personages of our early history, her description instinct with the wealth of informing detail which renders all her works so charming to the reader.

Of particular interest,-though such comparisons are invidious,-is the temper of the social atmosphere, forecasting the political changes soon to come. The attempt to fix the (officially) social position of the President and his wife, and the usages by which they were to be governed in their intercourse with the world-at-large, is a case in point. The political contest between the Federalists and anti-Federalists went hand in hand with that between the old-world aristocracy of Washington and the new-world democracy of Jefferson.

The illustrations are numerous, reproductions of portraits and miniatures of men and women prominent at the time.

Salons Colonial and Republican is from the Lippincott Press, like Heirlooms in Miniature, with which it is sold in sets, in crushed buckram binding; or Salons may be had by itself, in either crushed buckram or half levant.

Though announced for publication some months ago, it is now just in the market, having been delayed-destroyed, indeed-by the fire, at which time it was actually on press. But the delay has not diminished the value of the book, and has but augmented the eager interest with which Miss Wharton's readersand they are many-have waited for its publication. One may well congratulate the author at having recovered so soon from a mishap so crushing.

matist. By Mrs. Jennie Bullard Waterbury. Illustrated.

The time is long since past when diplomatists were re-A New Race Diplo- garded as "trained liars"; and yet, in some ways, the stigma still sticks, albeit unconsciously. Still, it cannot but be acknowledged that in the world of to-day the affairs of nation with nation are conducted more in accordance

with strict business equity, and less upon the maxim that "language was given us to conceal our thoughts." That such is the case, is amply proved by the fact that a man like Lowell, to say nothing of his predecessors and successors, could serve faithfully as a diplomatist without in any way violating his private integrity. And it is to Lowell and his kind that the world is indebted for the beneficial change.

Such a diplomatist,—a true "new race diplomatist,"—is Stephen Markoe, the central figure of Mrs. Waterbury's novel, published by the Messrs. Lippincott. To weave the social and diplomatic life of Washington, New York, and Paris into a tale which, while without sensational features, shall possess strength and interest sufficient to hold the reader to the end, was Mrs. Waterbury's task; and she has done it well. To contrast Stephen Markoe, a self-made man, with Ferdinand Lamballe, hereditary nobleman of France; to draw such diverse personalities as Kate Markoe, Jack Conway, Burgess, and Mariotti, to say nothing of the other characters; to place them in an appropriate setting, working out a logical plot, with the detail that lends verisimilitude,—this also she has done, and done well. And not the least of the attractions of her work is the intense Americanism that breathes through it all, in just contrast to the spirit of the older civilizations.

The illustrations are five in number, from the hand of Edouard Cucuel, collaborator with W. C. Morrow in *Bohemian Paris of To-Day*, noticed in a previous issue.

Chalmette. By Clinton Ross. WIth Frontispiece.

There is something finely picturesque in the battle of New Orleans: first of all, the intense national pride—nowhere more intense than in America—is aroused at the gallant conduct of our motley horde of soldiers, back-woods men,

free negroes, planters, sailors, and pirates, commanded by that strange character, Andrew Jackson,—a character well-nigh impossible in any place at any time but in the America of that day. And we can reconstruct in imagination the confident British troops, veterans of the Peninsula, fresh from the training of the great Wellington himself, and led by Pakenham, brother-in-law to that Wellington; and all, officers and men, easy, confident, flushed yet with the glory of the victory over Napoleon. So they advanced, on that eventful eighth of January; advanced in the face of certain defeat—for there seems to have been no possibility of carrying the American position by storm-and of almost certain death, with the grim British obedience to orders that found its most picturesque development at Balaklava. But the world knows how unsuccessful they were. "And the bands burst out with a great clamor of 'Hail, Columbia.' But as the scurrying smoke left the field, we turned from exultation almost to dismay. Such a field as that Robe may never see again. Such a crime of war! In a quarter of a mile bodies were packed away together, some still, some trying to crawl away. And these were the fine, smoothly-shaven soldiers of the King of Great Britain,—our cousins in blood and tradition." That Mr. Ross' book is interesting,—but such a question never arises in the mind of the prospective reader. So we need say no more about its contents. The current issue of the Lippincott Select Novels, it is to be had in paper and cloth bindings.



The Gender of

SINCE men have been proud of being men, and since women have taken to defending themselves for being women, the comparative truthfulness of men and women has been much discussed. Reading some time since the public statement of a New York judge,

who declared from the bench that women were incapable of telling the truth, the opinion of a number of men and women, who may be called representative, has been sought on the question of the gender of truth.

"It has been my experience," says an alderman of one of the largest of cities, "that most people are untruthful when they have anything important at stake. I have never found any difference between men and women in this respect. I have been deceived by both sexes hundreds of times, but some day I hope to find an honest man and an honest woman. I have been especially deceived by women who have applied to me for assistance."

"I should say casually," declares a Philadelphia society woman, "that men have a stricter regard for truth than do their sisters. A man can be held accountable for a lie, while a woman goes scot free if detected."

"I fear that absolute regard for truth is a very rare thing in either sex," is the judgment of a noted clergyman. "I am inclined to think there is more daring and deliberate lying among men, more purposeless fibbing among women."

"All men, and all women too, are liars," says a famous actress. "I have not believed any one implicitly for years."

"I believe that women act more upon impulse and are naturally more truthful than are men," declares a judge. "Men and women, however, lie for pretty much the same reasons, though men are more apt to lie for financial gains. But all my experience has not given me a discernment of the feminine mind."

"Women are far more truthful than men," says a woman who is proud to be called "a home woman." "A man lies by what he does not tell, rather than by what he says. He is apt to tell only half the truth. Women lie most frequently from a desire to smooth things over and to say things that will please."

"In my opinion," says a lawyer noted for his shrewdness in getting the truth out of witnesses, "men and women are equally truthful, or untruthful."

"It has been my experience," says a newspaper man who is experienced, "that men and women are equally untruthful, but there is a distinct difference in their reasons for lying. Women are untruthful in small affairs, but in matters of great importance they usually tell the truth bluntly. A man will be brutally frank in small things, but will lie when there is a big object to be gained."



"Sex has nothing to do with veracity," says a prominent club woman. "Truth depends upon character and environment. If a man or a woman lacks character, untruthfulness will be a matter of temptation merely. The only difference I can see is in the size of the falsehood. The magnitude or pettiness of the lie depends upon and is commensurate with the surroundings."

Caroline Lockhart.

HERITAGE

(Suggested by reading Drummond's "Ascent of Man")

WHEN the first man and woman had left the seclusion of the Garden, crossed the river of Possibility, and stood upon the shore of Time, ready for their onward journey towards Posterity, the Angel of Opportunity appeared to them and said:

"Man, make a prayer to Nature and Life. Petition wisely, for whatsoever you ask shall be the heritage of your sex forever."

And the man thought and thought, then, looking up at the glowing sun, exclaimed: "O Nature, do not thrust your greatest throes upon me, nor persist in making me remember pain."

The Angel said to the woman, "Pray thou also with wisdom."

As the woman bent low her head she softly said: "O Nature, do not allow me to grow callous nor empty. Hold me close to the joys, so few, the sorrows, so many, that I may gain strength from each."

Again the Angel bade the man pray, and once more he stood and looked towards the glowing sun, saying: "O Life, give me joy and pleasure. Do not unload upon me the sorrows of others; do not open my eyes to pangs I cannot assuage. Give me sweets and the power to cast aside regret."

"Sister," said the Angel, "pray."

The woman bent still lower and in a softer voice uttered her petition: "O Life, do not take away from me the memory of sorrow, the shell holding the kernel of joy; do not allow me to become blind to the debt I owe others. Make me tender; give me a woman's portion, pain,—that I may attain my full stature."

And that the Angel's promise might be redeemed, from that hour there was implanted in man the overmastering love of pleasure, and engrafted in the heart of woman the undying instincts of motherhood.

George Denton Canfield.

WE telephoned to the intelligence office for a cook. As Annie was

what's in a

Name?

Name?

"Annie," I said, "what is the rest of your name?"

"That is it," was the reply.

"Yes," I continued, "I know your name is Annie, but Annie what?"

MELLIN'S FOOD



Laughs because he is happy. Happy because he is healthy. Healthy because he lives on MELLIN'S FOOD

I send you under separate cover photograph of our baby, seven months old. He's a Mellin's Food boy, for that is the only food he ever had that agreed with him, and we tried five kinds. When we began his stomach had been disordered by frequent changes of food, but after using Mellin's Food he became the picture of health and happiness. The photograph is typical of him, as he is nearly always laughing—hasn't cried an hour in three months.

PROF. BERT M. LASUER, 229 Lansing Street, Utica, N. Y.

Send for our "Portraits of Mellin's Food Babies."

MELLIN'S FOOD COMPANY, Boston, Mass.

- "That is it, I tell you, missus," she said with a broad smile.
- "You have two names surely," I insisted, "a first name and a second name. Now, what is your second name?"
- "Oh, missus," she exclaimed with some impatience, "I tell you that is it."
 With rising displeasure, thinking she was trifling, I said very decidedly,
 "Your name is Annie what?"
- "Oh," she cried enthusiastically, "I am so glad you know! I tink you will never know. Yes, that is it!"

For a while I sat in silent despair, the girl eying me with a rueful countenance. Finally a happy thought struck me.

- "Annie," I asked very mildly, "what is your father's name?"
- "Michael," was the doleful reply.
- "Michael what?" I almost gasped, feeling that I was suddenly becoming a parrot.

But like the eternal "Nevermore" of Poe's "Raven" came the echo, "That is it!"

A sudden illumination! Perhaps mine is the dull brain.

- "What do you put on your father's letters?" I next interrogated.
- "That is what I must put or he would not get them," was the sobbing response.

Unwilling to give up after such a trial of patience on both sides, I asked gently, "How do you spell it?"

Slowly came the solution of the enigma-" W-a-c-h-t."

Mrs. S. M. Montgomery.

HER LETTERS

By Warwick James Price

I LOVE the books that round me wait,
Great words of men the years name great,
I love my briar, (degenerate—
Banned by my betters!)
I love the blaze I dream before,
I love a friend's knock at the door,
But more than all,—ah! so much more!—
I love her letters.

A BINGHAMPTON high-school pupil was taking a history examination which contained a question on Nero. For the moment he could not remember who the gentleman was, so he wrote this: "The less said about Nero the better." His paper was marked one hundred.

E. E. Stow.



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WHEAT grown in the Red River Valley of the North, Minnesota and the Dakotas, contains more gluten, more phosphates, more health-giving strength sustaining qualities than wheat grown anywhere else in the world. It is hard Spring wheat, and makes better bread than Winter wheat.

Pillsbury's Best Flour

is made from this hard Spring wheat, grown in the Red River Valley of the North, Minnesota and the Dakotas. Not from any or all of this wheat, but from the choicest of it, is Pillsbury's Best Flour made. In short, the wheat from which Pillsbury's Best Flour is made is the choicest product of the most famous wheat producing soil in the world.

Grocers everywhere sell Pillsbury's Best Flour. Ask yours for book of Pillsbury Recipes-FREE.

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MAKERS ALSO OF PILLSBURY'S VITOS AND PILLSBURY'S OATS.

A Prize Thought

A TEACHER of music in one of the public schools of the South desired to impress the pupils with the meaning of the signs "f" and "ff" in a song they were about to sing. After explaining that "f" meant forte, he said: "Now, children, if 'f' means forte, what does 'ff' mean?"

Silence reigned for a moment, and then he was astonished to hear a bright little fellow shout:

" Eighty!"

J. Wesley Lafferty.

and reading will take its place as a curative science. Here The Medicine system will be arranged with regard to their medicinal value, of Literature, understood. Some day its properties and its effects on the LITERATURE is a medicine, but as such it has never been properly are some suggestions as to the lines on which such treatment should be laid: To begin, the basis of the mental food supply must be wholesome and free from deleterious adulterations. Tonics are needful, but should not be taken in over-quantities, and soporifies should be avoided as tending to a flabby, unformed condition of the brain. Pap should be eliminated from the treatment of adult mentalities except in rare cases of great debility where the mind is not strong enough to support a more consistent food. Great care should be exercised in the administration of strong drugs; only to the most healthy, for instance, should Browning, Whitman, and Meredith be given in small doses, a chapter, two verses or so, at a time. (Note: Persons liable to indigestion should avoid Browning.) Shakespeare is always a safe tonic, and one that may be given freely even to the most debilitated, those whose mental stomachs are so weak as to reject it excepted. Caine is an irritant that may be used with excellent results on a too placid mind, and Haggard, Crane, and Dickens are all good as mild lubricants where a too excited condition is not desired. Wilkins, MacLaren, Ford, or Crockett may be taken, before retiring, as a sedative antidote to mental efforts. When a strong excitative is needed a quatrain of Swin-

Pending the production of a completed pharmacopæia, or, more properly, materia medica, I append a specimen recipe, intended for the treatment of young persons suffering from weakness brought about by indulgence in Libby pap or afflicted with familystorypaper paralysis.

burne every two hours will produce the desired result.

"Do not withdraw the offending diet immediately, but gradually substitute for it doses of Humphreyward and Mebraddon. Continue this treatment for some months, and then make frequent applications of Quillercouch, together with occasional pellets of Rudyardkipling and Henryjames. At this stage of the patient's treatment extract of Shakespeare may be administered in short doses. The patient will be found gradually to like this preparation, and when the taste in that direction is firmly established, it will be found that strong

1900

Annual Statement of the RAVELERS

Insurance

Hartford, Conn., January 1, 1900.

Company.

Chartered 1863. (Stock.)

Life and Accident Insurance.

James G. Batterson. Dresident.

SYLVESTER C. DUNHAM, Vice-Prest.

JOHN E. MORRIS, Secretary.

H. J. MESSENGER, Actuary.

EDWARD V. PRESTON, Supt. of Agencies.

J. B. LEWIS. M.D.. Surgeon and Adjuster. PAID-UP CAPITAL \$1.000.000 ASSETS. \$2,049,222.72 Real Estate Cash on hand and in Bank 1,810,269.96 Loans on bond and mort., real estate 5,981,842.52 245 983 39 1,497,175,51

Interest accrued but not due Loans on collateral security 1,305,307.27 Loans on this Company's Policies . Deferred Life Premiums 310,997.64 Prems. due and unreported on Life Policies . 259,449,36 Government Bonds 789.016.96 County and municipal bonds 3.114,997.64 Railroad stocks and bonds 7,819,225.19 Bank stocks . Other stocks and bonds 1,288,350.00

> Total Assets \$27,760,511.56

> > LIABILITIES.

Reserve, 3½ per cent., Life Department . Reserve for Reinsurance, Accident Department . \$20,406,734.00 1,500,369.22 Present value Installment Life Policies . . 783,193.00 Reserve for Claims against Employers 586,520,26 Losses in process of adjustment 219.833.02 Life Premiums paid in advance
Special Reserve for unpaid taxes, rents, etc. 33,178,11 Special Reserve, Liability Department 100,000,00

> Total Liabilities . . \$23,739,827.61

Excess Security to Policyholders, . 4,020,683.95 Surplus . \$3,020,683.95

STATISTICS TO DATE.

LIFE DEPARTMENT. New Life Insurance written in 1899 . 17.165 688 Life insurance in force

Insurance on installment plan at commuted value.

1,522,417.06 16,039,380.95 Returned to Policyholders in 1899 Returned to Policyholders since 1864,

ACCIDENT DEPARTMENT.

Number Accident Claims paid in 1899, Whole number Accident Claims paid, 15,386 339,636 \$1,227,977.34 23,695,539.94 Returned to Policyholders in 1899, Returned to Policyholders since 1864,

TOTALS.

\$2,750,394.40 39,734,920.89 Returned to Policyholders in 1899, Returned to Policyholders since 1864,

PHILADELPHIA OFFICE: S. E. Cor. Fourth and Chestnut Sts.

1900

and modern drugs, such as Henrikibsen (though some practitioners strongly denounce the use of this preparation), Georgemeredith, and Georgebernardshaw may be used with beneficent results."

J. P. Coughlan.

SONG

By Robert Loveman

WE are so jolly, contented, and gay, Enid and I and the baby, What do we care for the Appian Way, Enid and I and the baby? Politics, wars, and the tariff may go, Little we reck how the fickle winds blow, We're a triumvirate, mighty and low, Enid and I and the baby.

Climb up, my little son, here to my knee-Enid and I and the baby, Isn't he sturdy and brave as could be ?-Enid and I and the baby; Take him, my dear, he is weary with play, See how he blinks in that Sleepy-town way, Here is a kiss all around, and hurrä-Enid and I and the baby.

The Scoon that Removed Little

LITTLE was the editor, reporter, compositor, and business manager of the Waubansee Weekly Star, out West. Waubansee was a city of five hundred inhabitants, whose frame houses straggled along a few yards of one of the Santa Fé's branch lines. After passing Waubansee, the railroad got discouraged and stopped out in the middle of the prairie. Though everybody wondered how Little lived, he not only got along, but had surplus enough to take the milliner to the ice-cream festival given by the Baptist Church. He sang in the choir and called off at the dances in Odd-Fellows' Hall. There was nothing stiff about the Star's editorials. Its style of acknowledging a pair of chickens from Sam Buckingham and its compliments to Jim Handler on his Berkshire shoats were graceful and easy, and its demands that Congress should appropriate five hundred dollars to improve

Little was as happy as the day was long until he happened to secure a pass from Waubansee to Washington "and return," which latter was important, as it proved. At Washington he was pained to observe a slackening in the joy

the navigation of the Waukarusha were considered virile.



THERE were five times as many cans of Libby's Luncheon Meats sold in 1899 as in 1898; proving the

Great Popularity

of these convenient, delectable Meats.

Libby's Luncheon Meats are delicious foods, perfectly prepared —always all ready—no fire—no bother—all you have to do is to serve. For Sandwiches, Quick Lunches, Suppers, Emergencies of every description. They include delicacies, and substantials, appetizing and satisfying—for all meals, in-doors and out-doors.

We publish a neat little book, called "How to make Good Things to Eat," which we send free to every one who requests it by letter or postal. It gives more than 100 receipts for preparing Libby's Luncheon Meats.

LIBBY, McNEILL & LIBBY, Chicago.

with which his Congressman was wont to greet the *Star* editor when elections were being closely fought. However, Little soon forgot this ingratitude in the pleasure of a trip to Boston, where he went to visit some relatives who, prior to this, had known only vaguely of his existence.

In Boston it seemed only properly courteous for the editor of the Waubansee Star to call upon the editors of the various Boston dailies, and Little was not the kind of a man to hurt any one's feelings by seeming neglect. The way in which these Boston editors happened to be out on important business whenever Little sent in his nicely printed cards was a revelation to him of how hard Boston editors had to work at getting advertisements and printing personals and inking the roller. But during his several waits in the "city room" Little became inoculated with the virus of the metropolitan newspaper life. He promptly wrote to Waubansee, closing a deal which had been pending for some time, and which involved the sale of the Star to the proprietor of the Waukarusha Livery and Feed Stable. Then Little began the struggle which shortly ended at his being taken on the reportorial staff of one of the Boston dailies at a salary of no less than twelve dollars the week, a salary that seemed munificent to Little until he went to get a boarding-place.

Somehow his former editorship of the Star did not impress the night deck as Little had expected, and he bitterly complained that the night editor cut all the "pleasing personality" out of his copy. It was to this dense stupidity and jealousy of the night editor that Little ascribed the failure of the public to recognize his style immediately. Little listened eagerly to the stories of "scoops" told in the city room after the paper had gone to press, and soon decided that the road to newspaper recognition lay through scoops, rather than style. After considerable thought, he decided to abandon the idea of shooting up to the Mayor's office for scoop material, even though his presence on the spot might give him the field over his rivals, and just waited. Even as everything comes to him who waits, so the scoop came to Little.

"Little," said the city editor, "there's a Home for Orphan Dogs in this city, supported by a cranky old woman who has lots of blue blood and money. The people living in the neighborhood of the Home complain of the howling of the dogs. Go out and interview the neighbors about it."

On the way to the Home Little had his inspirations. Since the woman was so prominent by her riches and her social position, anything that happened to her was of interest to the city community. If he should craftily stir up those kicking neighbors and have this prominent woman arrested for keeping a nuisance, he had his scoop. So he plotted and contrived, fanning the wrath of the man next door, to whom the dogs had given insomnia, inflaming the anger of the nervous old maid on the other side, who hated dogs anyway, because she loved cats. Aided and stirred and prompted by Little, the Sleepless Man and the Nervous Old Maid were rounded up by Little at a magistrate's office, where, after much demur on the magistrate's part, the warrant was issued. Little wrote it up instantly, coming into the office on the run.



abst Malt Extrac

"Baby's First Adventure" is the prettiest, most artistic picture of the day. Painted by the celebrated Herman Kaulbach. The original has been purchased by the owners of Pabst Malt Extract expressly for this reproduction.

The Dyspeptic's Wife

They say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. But what if your husband have dyspepsia? My dear woman, your task may be a hard one, but do not lose courage! He wants good food, easily digested, and also something that will help his stomach. Pabst Malt Extract, The "Best" Tonic, is both in one. It is a rich, nutritious food, readily taken up into the system, but better yet, it is just the right digestive tonic, which works upon the food and also upon the stomach itself. It tones up the overtaxed organ, acting directly upon the weakened membranes, and thus helps to cure the malady. It is a twofold bracer; braces up the stomach and braces up the man.

How to Get this To the Public:

Picture Free
WHEN you buy your first six bottles your druggist will make you a present of a lovely Artotype entitled, "Baby's First Adventure." This fine picture cannot be bought at art stores nor bought at art stores nor obtained by any other method than that plainly outlined here.

Picture The undersigned agrees to give the bearer of this certificate one copy, 13x17, of the Artotype in fifteen colors, reproducing Kaulbach's famous picture, "Baby's First Adventure," when each of the numbers on the end hereof has been canceled upon the purchase of a bottle of The "Best" Tonic.

Draggist's Druggist's

each one of	mese space
1	2
by private i or mark.	nitial, date Each space
3	4
represents o	ne bottle o TONIC soi
5	.6

Little's scoop made a real sensation. Even the night editor said it was not too bad. It appeared on the first page, headed

WARRANT OUT

FOR MRS. DUNCAN.

"If a man's got it in him," said Little, meaning genius, "it's bound to come out." He went to bed that night feeling that his feet were firmly planted on the ladder of fame, and that climbing was easy.

Now there was a proprietor of the paper who read the paper very carefully, in Paris. This proprietor had decided social aspirations, though in this he had never taken Little into his confidence. For some time the proprietor had been laying careful siege to Mrs. Duncan's social influence, and at last Mrs. Duncan was beginning to beam; there were prospects, if the beam was carefully fostered, of Mrs. Duncan extending a gracious hand to the proprietor's family to help them over the wall which divides the merely "nice people" from the "inner cult."

Mrs. Duncan was a lady of tempestuous action, and she burned the cable with a scorching message to Paris. About two hours later the editor received a cable message from Paris which read,—

"Remove Mrs. Duncan's cause of complaint."

Only six words, but in as many moments Mrs. Duncan's cause of complaint found himself adrift in the cold, cold world, somewhat dazed. His return pass had not expired, and Little returned to Waubansee to buy back the Star, the livery stable man parting with it without much urging. Its first issue, after the old management resumed the editorial toga, contained a scathing article on the corruption of the Eastern Press by the money power.

Caroline Lockhart.

GENERAL N. B. FORREST, the noted Confederate cavalry leader, was a hard fighter with whatever weapon he chose for a combat. Few men got the best of him with sword or tongue. They are still telling in Alabama of a curt retort he gave to a rival officer

who once insinuated that Forrest used hair-dve.

The Reason

Why

"How is it, General," sneered the officer, "that your hair is gray but your beard is black?"

"Probably because, unlike some people I know, I use my head more than my jaws," was Forrest's grim reply.

Mrs. C.—"How stupid Mrs. D. is! I have just tried every subject from Browning to canning corn, and she remained as unresponsive as the Venus of Milo."

Mrs. E .- "You didn't ask about her children."

E. E. Stow.

NERVE POWER

GAINED AND MAINTAINED BY THE CURE OF VARICOCELE

Every normally constituted and healthy man has a natural and abundant endowment of potential energy or reserve nerve power.

The possession of these reserve forces gives to a man the attributes of an uncrowned king—a ruler by right of might over men less liberally endowed with nervous energy.

Units of nerve energy are drawn from the blood and stored in the cellular substance of the brain and ganglia for use in the performance of involuntary function and voluntary action.

In a condition of absolute and perfect health these reservoirs of Vital Power are well stored, and potential energy is so abundant

DO NOT WEAR

SUSPENSORY

that the whole physical and mental being is filled and thrilled with the triumphant consciousness of power.

The blood is the foundation of nerve power. Impure, thin, vitiated blood does not furnish a stable foundation for nerve structure.

When the nerve-cells are fed on poisons for months and years the injury to the nervous system is sometimes irreparable.

The tiny blood clots formed in VARICO-CELE are one of the most frequent causes of Paralysis.

They become toxic



DELMER D. RICHARDSON, M. D.

(poisonous), and when carried into the general circulation, carry death instead of life to the nerve-cells.

This morbid matter is absorbed into the nerve substance, and the effect is not unlike that of interference with the electric current.

Decay and waste of nerve force inevitably

Locomotor Ataxia is one of the forms of Paralysis most frequently caused by neglected Varicocele.

In my work as Specialist in diseases of the Pelvic Region, I have cured over 10,000 cases of Varicocele alone by my Electro Chemic Method. No other physician in the world has enjoyed such an opportunity for studying the effects of this

insidious malady. I CURE VARICOCELE TO STAY CURED IN FIVE DAYS.

My home is fitted for the accommodation of patients, and all who come are assured of the most agreeable surroundings and most complete hotel facilities.

Write a careful description of your case and I will reply personally and confidentially.

My books are free, provided to cents is enclosed Sent in plain sealed cover.

Even if Paralytic symptoms have not yet developed you should not delay a moment to be rid of Varicocele.

You can never be the man you ought to be while physically imperfect.

DELMER D. RICHARDSON, M. D.

THE RICHARDSON HOME, 1264-1272 MICHIGAN AVENUE, CHICAGO.

A Fool for Luck by the hot dawn of an Arizona morning when a red-haired, freekled-faced cow-boy swaggered out of the door of the saloon, laughing boisterously. He pulled a sombrero over his keen gray eyes and swung himself into the depths of a Gallup cow-saddle; whereupon the broncho under the saddle pitched across the road, brought up against the New York Store, and bit the leg of his rider. This made many silver dollars clink in the big pocket of the cow-boy's "chaps," and he, hearing them clink, called derisively to the group of men who had followed him out the door—no silver clinked in their pockets:

"When you all think you have enough dinero to afford me again, send word down to the Quarter-Circle Bar, an' I'll give you another lesson in stud poker." The broncho squealed as the spurs dug into his ribs, and Pink Murry disappeared down Alkali Avenue in a cloud of dust.

"A fool for luck every time," observed Old Man Hooper a little bitterly, for he had lost a bunch of cows during the night. "Pink really don't know any more about poker than he does about the Holy Bible, which ain't much. Last winter he rides over to Fairview for a little time and happens in the Sunday school while a Methodist missionary was running there. 'Mr. Cow-boy,' the minister asks Pink, 'who killed Abel?' Pink says politely: 'You must excuse me, parson. I'm a stranger in this camp.' Yet that's the boy who draws four cards and fills a flush. The ways of the Most High are mighty mysterious in Arizona."

"An' when he comes back from shooting black-tail up the Gila, with just one cartridge left, he goes and kills a she silvertip that's naturally scheduled to eat a magazine full of cartridges along with the man who shoots them. But it's Pink's fool luck; just like it was when his pony steps sudden from hoof-deep into a no-bottom quicksand hole as he crosses the Grande, and Pink comes safe by a quick jump over the tail. He oughter been drowned right thar. It's his fool luck," chimed in Jim Black despondently.

"Once this Pink sleeps in a 'dobe full of greasers with all kinds of smallpox, but Pink don't catch nothing," added Spike Sanders moodily. "He'll always have fool luck."

In the afternoon, however, Hermosa changed its mind. Two boys from the XI.T range rode in, big with the importance of the news they bore. "Thar's been a sure 'nough cloud-burst down yonder on the Seco," said one excitedly. "Came down early this morning! It's taken off Bojarque's ranch-house and that bunch of Mexican 'dobes up this side of the cañon, and the trail through the gulch is eight feet under water."

"Wal, wal," said Jim Black, suddenly animated, "the Seco'll be down again by night, but she's certainly got old Pink this trip. He was due in that canon just about the cloud-burst's time."

"Couldn't have been more than half-way through," assented the bar-keeper gloomily. Then Old Man Hooper, nearly asleep, strolled in to hear the news. Put On Your Thinking-Cap,

And take up the question of Pearline. Do you think it could have reached such an enormous success, if it hadn't possessed every merit that has been claimed for it? Do you think that millions of women would be using it every day, as they do, if they knew of anything like

it for washing and cleaning? Do you think it could have grown so rapidly and so wonderfully, if women were not enthusiastic about it, talking of it, urging their friends to use it? Do you think that hundreds of millions of packages could have been used, as they have been, if there were anything that could be said against it?

P. S.—Don't you think you had better try a little **Pearline**, to your own saving and profit?

MILLIONS NOW PEARLINE

FOR HOUSEKEEPERS.—It has been brought to the attention of this magazine that baking powders are offered for sale in many localities which contain alum.

Alum is unfit for food, producing indigestion, alum heart, sallow complexion, constipation, and attendant ills. It is not fair to the public that such a substance disguised as a baking powder should be sold in order to allow a maker or a grocer a little more profit, regardless of the health of the family.

Good baking powder costs about forty-five cents a pound. Alum baking powder is sold for twenty-five cents a pound or less. The difference in cost between a good and wholesome baking powder and an alum powder would not exceed a dollar for a whole year's supply. People are very foolish to take the risk and suffer ill-health for the sake of a few pennies, which after all are not saved.

Good baking powder is one of the most useful things in the household, and we seriously urge our readers to save their health, and money also in the end, by insisting upon having a good brand like Royal, Dr. Price's, or Cleveland's.

If requested to do so by our subscribers, we will publish the names of the alum baking powders sold in various sections of the country.

"I'm offering ten to one the cloud-burst don't git him, backing Pink's fool luck on principle," he growled, and Ferguson, of the Gray Eagle mine, took the bet.

Pink had ridden away in an exultant mood in the dawn, which means he had ridden just as fast as prodding spurs and lashing quirt and the slapping of a big sombrero could make his angry pony fly along the level six miles that stretched from the camp to the canon of the Rio Seco, through which went the trail to his ranch. Pulling his pony's ears and combing the tangled mane with his gloved hand in his satisfaction at the speed his broncho had shown, Pink trotted carelessly into the gloom of the canon and enlivened it by yelling fiercely in the spots where long experience in yelling had proved to him the best echoes came back from the towering cliffs close to each stirrup. The cañon was almost two miles long, and the walls on either side rose shoer for a couple of hundred feet. The trail was the bed of a little stream that filled the bottom of the narrow gulch with its shallows and which was dignified by being called the Rio Seco. Great rocks were carelessly scattered here and there, and even a cowpuncher camped at its entrance if he was caught there by darkness. At the far end the gulch broadened into a valley between rolling hills, where the cattle came down to drink and to feed on the green grass, a wonderful sight in Arizona.

The pony, splashing quickly through the shallows and clattering over the rocks, had passed deep within the two great walls when suddenly it stopped and trembled. It half-wheeled around, thrust forward both ears, stretched out its ungainly neck as if listening, and then squealed in evident terror. Wheeling around again, it started down the cañon on a bolt, but Pink gave the cruel bit a great jerk, and the pony fell back to a walk. A moment later the broncho was lathered with sweat.

Now, Pink had frequently heard his pony squeal with rage, but this was different. "A pure case of scared," he said to himself, "an' no wall-eyed pinto cow-pony is going to git scared 'less there's something to be scared at that's big an' important an' needin' attention." So he pulled up his trembling pony and listened. Far away and sullen, like a low growl, he heard an unceasing noise, which, even in the seconds he listened, grew ominously distinct.

"Good God!" said Pink Murry, looking despairingly at the cliffs that towered sheer close to either stirrup. "It ain't much of a race-track, pinto, but we've certainly got a race to do."

The pinto did not need the spur, but he got it. He did not need the quirt, but he got that too. The rush and the roar of the cloud-burst and the ferocious din of many waters piled in one, booming and swashing as it tore through the cañon at their heels, made that pony run like a Derby winner gone stark mad with fear. In the saddle sat a pale, freckled-faced cow-boy, riding in grim earnestness at last. With cool skill he swung the maddened horse around jutting corners of the cliffs and lifted him as he leaped over the bowlders in his path. Under the flying hoofs an inch of water flowed placidly. A hundred yards behind ten feet of water tossed about bowlders like pebbles. So horse and rider



What's The Difference Between our genuine Cabin and other makes? These cut speak plainer than words.

Our New 1902 Style Square Quaker Folding Turkish Bath Gabinet

the only lawfil cabinet made, and is GUARANTEED TO BE THE BEST OF ALL.
CABINETS AT ANY PRICE, OR YOUR MONEY CHEERFULLY REFUNDED.
It has a Real Door opening wide, n hinges, not a bag to pull on over head, or a hole to craw through. It has a strong, rigid, galv, steel frame.

Covering best, antiseptic, hygiene cloth, rabber lined. Our Cabinet does not rest on the shoulders, nor pull on over head. No woodwork to rot, warp, crack or pull apart. A wooden frame for a Cabinet would be about as valuable as a wooden stove. Our Cabinet is large and roomy, knees, arms and legs do not touch the sides. Plenty of room for hot foot bath and to sponge, we have a wooden of the body while inside. Has Top Curtains to open for cooling off; in fact, all the latest improvements. Will last twenty years.

TO OPERATE simply open door, step in, sit down. (All done in one minute). Bathe, open top curtains, cool off perfectly, step out. Only perfect Cabinet made. Folds flat in 1 in. space. Weighs but 10 lbs. Easily carried.

net made. Folds flat in 1 in. space. Weighs but 10 lbs. Easily carried.

RECOMMENDED BY OVER 1.000.000 HAPPY USEERS—such eminent people as Alice B. Stockham, M. D.; Chicago, Editor of "Tokology;" Congressman John J. Lenty; Louis Morrison; Mrs. Kendricks, Prin. Vassar College Rt. Rev. Bishop J. L. Spaulding; Rev. C. M. Keith, Editor "Holiness Advocate;" E. M. S. Marble, M. D.; Pres. Woman's Club. Washington, D. C.; Edward Reschert, M. D. of Univ. of Penns.; Senator S. McCarrell and thousands of others.

our new 1902 style genuine Square Cabinet as it actually appears. HOT QUAKER BATHS BENEFIT EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD.

Open the 5,000,000 pore and Units.

Open the 5,000,000 pore of the skin, sweat out all the poisons in the blood, which if retained, overwork the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys. Make clear akins, bright eyes. Keeps you strong, vigorous and healthy. Prevents Colds, Lagrippe, Fevers, consumption, and all Disease.

WE POSITIVELY CUARANTEE RESULTS. Our medicated bath treatment will cure Nervous Troubles, Debility, Weakness, Sleeplessness, Neuralgia, Aches, Pains, Colds, Lagrippe, Obesity. Cures Rheumatism - (we offer \$50 reward for a case that cannot be relieved). Cures Headaches, Gout, Sciatica, Piles, Dropsy, Diabetes, Indigestion, all blood, skin, liver, stomach and sidney troubles. Not only cures, but prevents all ailments peculiar to ladies. With the Cabinet, if desired, is a Head and Complexion Steaming Attachment. Beautifies complexion, cures and prevents skin eruptions and diseases, Ezema, Pimples, Blotches, Blackheads, Asthma, Catarrh, Bronchitis, all Throat Troubles.

IF OURS IS NOT THE BEST CABINET MADE WE DON'T WANT YOU TO KEEP IT, but so confident are we that it will please you, that WE SEND IT ON 30 DAYS TRIAL,

to be returned at our expense and your money refunded if not just as represented. What could be more fair? We have been making genuine Bath Cabinets for y.acre the largest m'f'rs in the world. Annual sales 300,000 Cabinets. Value \$1,500,000. We're responsible, capital \$100,000.00.

OUR PRICE IS WONDERFULLY LOW. Sent to any address upon recipt of \$5.00, complete with heater directions, formulas for medicated baths and ailments. Face Steamer \$1.00 extra. Remit by Bank Draft, P.O. or Express Money Order, or certified Check. ORDER TODAY. You won't be disappointed. Money refunded after 30 days use, if Cabinet is not just as represented.

*Book on Baths," Testimonials, etc. FREE







Not On

Why pay \$7.50 or \$12.00 for wooden fra affairs, which rot, warp, split and are un isfactory, when a genuine Quaker with a frame, costs only \$5. ? Lasts 20 years, is guaranteed superior, or your money

AGENTS AND SALESMEN WANTED \$18 to \$50 WEEKLY.

MEN and WOMEN-At Home or Traveling. OUR AGENTS MADE OVER \$47,000 LAST MONTH. A bert Hill, of N. J., \$238 first month. John Hannibal. R. B., Conductor, \$634. Mr. Muncy, of Texas, \$12.50 first 2 hours, R. v. McDaniel, \$500 while preaching. Lida Kennedy, \$84.00 whil teaching. Mrs. Hitchcox, \$222 besides housekeeping.

LET US START YOU-BE A MONEY MAKER. We are spending 8350 00.00 adv, this Cabinet, creating an enormous demand right in y ur locality. You carry small stock a despity i and appoint agents. Failure impossible Every energetic man or w man makes \$5.00 to \$10.00 daily. Plenty good territyry. Write for Our Propositions, New Plans, Terms, etc., (stating age, town and county wanted). Address The WORLD MANUFACTURING CO., The Sole M'f'rs. 1248 World Bldg., Cincinnati. 0

[The above firm is thoroughly reliable.- Editor.

PROSPECTIVE MOTHERS.—Preparatory Hints; Bathing; Clothing; Habits; Fresh Air; Second Summer, etc.; are some of the subjects treated in "Babies," a book for young mothers sent free by Borden's Condensed Milk Co., N. Y., who make Gail Borden Eagle Brand.

A CURE FOR ASTIMA.—Asthma sufferers need no longer leave home and business in order to be cured. Nature has produced a vegetable remedy that will permanently cure Asthma and all diseases of the lungs and bronchial tubes. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases (with a record of 90 per cent. permanently cured), and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all sufferers from Asthma, Consumption, Catarrh, Bronchitis, and nervous diseases, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by Address with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. Noyes, 920 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

of "Ole

tore out of the canon at last and staggered up the slope of the hills to safety, having come through the last half of the Seco Cañon in three minutes, which Hermosa says is a lie.

All about him, on the crest of the hill, cattle pawed and bellowed and ran about, tossing both head and tail straight in the air, the cows with calves hustling the youngsters down the far side of the ridge. Pink turned quickly in his saddle and looked back. A great wall of logs and branches and sticks and rocks and leaves, the accumulations of the mountain bed of the Seco for many dry months, was being swiftly and mysteriously pushed through the cañon. Ten feet high it was in the cañon, but when it burst free into the broader valley, it broke and spread out somewhat. Behind it roared the pent-up waters, dark and swollen with anger. Like a nightmare the flood swept by Pink and the panting pony, swept by and swirled and churned itself, as if reaching back after him. Bowlders grumbled as they were rolled about in its depths, and logs shot by like arrows. The noise of its fury deafened him, and the incredible swiftness with which it swirled past made him dizzy. The big sheet-iron roof of Bojarque's ranch-house, borne on the angry waters like a roof of cork, flitted by him like the flickering of a shadow on a river. The white-faced cow-boy watched it grimly for half an hour, while his horse stood under him with spreading legs and heaving sides.

At length the pony stretched out his neck and began to nibble grass. The cow-boy swung around in his saddle and picked up the reins.

"It's lucky for me you beat out that water, old hoss, for how could I swim with all the silver of Hermosa in my chaps?" said Pink Murry genially.

Caroline Lockhart.

INCOMPLETENESS

By Emma C. Dowd

Nothing is perfect,—weather, food, or friend; Who seeks completeness, searches without end. But as they come, the food, the friend, the weather, Make life worth living, taken all together.

THE wit of some of the distinguished ladies during the period of An Anecdote the late Civil War is illustrated by the retort of a typical dame. Mrs. C-l had a large plantation on the James River,

Virginie" where many officers and soldiers of the Union army were encamped. One day an officer came to the house and most politely asked to see Mrs. C-l. When she appeared he said:

"Madame, we have had a death in the ranks, and I have come to ask your permission to bury a Union soldier on your property. May I do so?"

"Why, certainly, Captain," replied Mrs. C--l. "You have my permission to bury the entire Union army on my property, if you will only do so."

V. Halsey.



NEW YORK
HENRY B. STOKES, President

THE NEW POLICY GUARANTEES

EXTENDED INSURANCE

PAID-UP VALUES

AND

LOANS AT 5%

AGENTS WANTED IN UNOCCUPIED TERRITORY

The Real Estate Trust Company

of Philadelphia,

SOUTHEAST CORNER CHESTNUT AND BROAD STREETS.

CAPITAL	•	•	•	٠		•	\$1,000,000
Surplus and	Und	divid	ed I	Profi	ts		520,000

Receives Deposits of Money payable by check, and allows Interest thereon. Collects Interest, Dividends, and Income of all kinds whatsoever.

Receives for safe keeping, Securities and other valuables, and rents Safe Deposit Boxes in Burglar-Proof Vaults. Buys, sells, and leases Real Estate in Philadelphia and its vicinity. Assumes general charge and management of Real and Personal Estates.

Executes Trusts of every description under the appointment of Courts, Corporations, and Individuals. Acts as Registrar or Transfer Agent for Corporations, and as Trustee under Corporation Mortgages. Receives Wills for safe keeping without charge.

FRANK K. HIPPLE, President. WILLIAM H. PHILLER, Secretary. WILLIAM F. NORTH, Treasurer.
THOMAS B. PROSSER, Real Estate Officer.

Her First Check

Retort

"Speaking of the way women do business," said Smiley, as he lit a fresh cigar, "reminds me of a story told me by an intimate friend of mine, a widower, who is the proud parent of a daughter, now in her sixteenth year, who bids fair to develop into a charac-

teristic business woman when she grows up.

"She is staying with friends and attending school in a distant town, and with the advent of cool weather she wrote her father that she was in urgent need of funds to purchase a new fall jacket. Not wishing to risk the cash in the mails, he enclosed in reply a check payable to her order for the amount he thought she would require.

"A couple of weeks later he went out to spend Sunday with the young lady whom he was proud to call daughter. After the first greetings were over he asked:

- "'Well, Bertha, did you get my letter all right?'
- "'Yes, papa,' was the reply.
- "' And was the amount what you wanted?"
- "'Yes, papa, and I am ever so much obliged; but---'
- "'But what, dear?' he asked, as she paused and began exploring her pockets.

"'Well, I've got my jacket,—it's a real lovely one, too!—and now, papa,' triumphantly producing the carefully preserved check, 'I wish you'd give me the money this calls for, so I can pay for it!'

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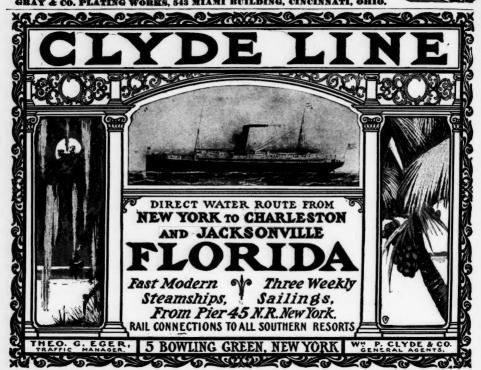
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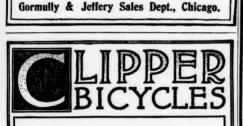
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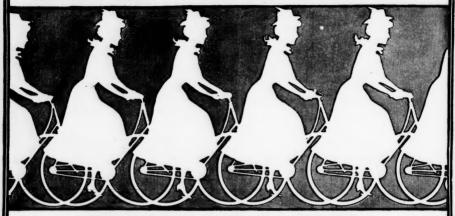
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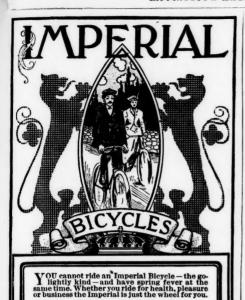
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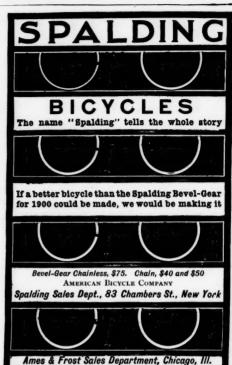
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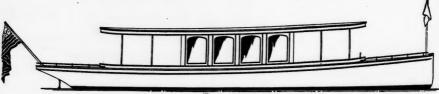


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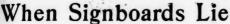
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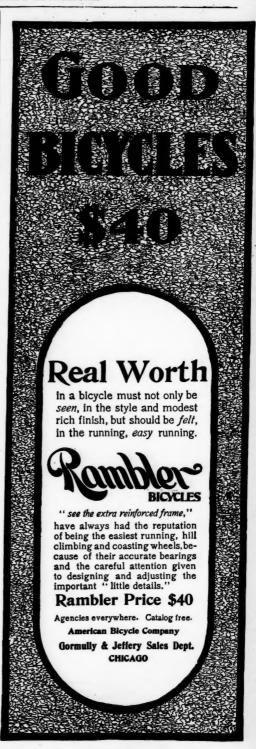
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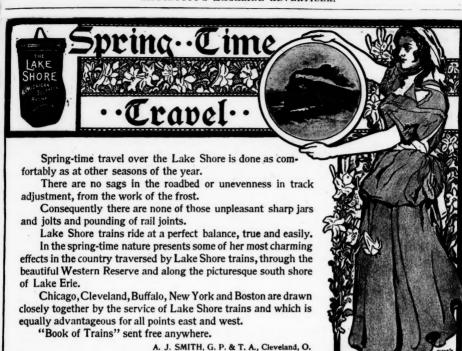


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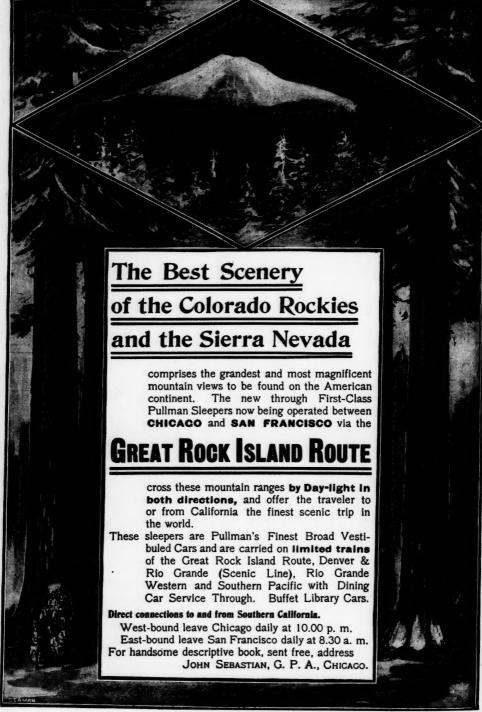
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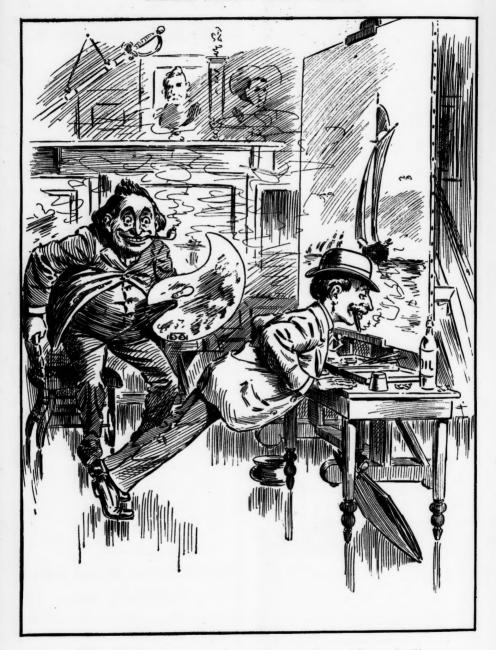
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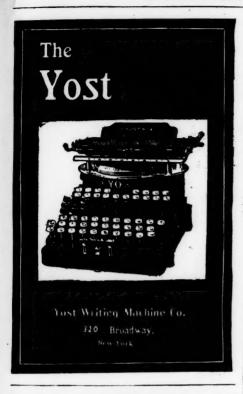
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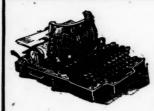
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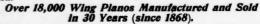
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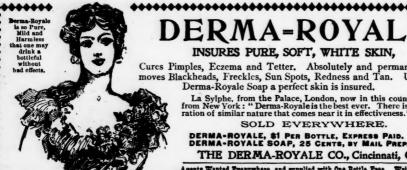
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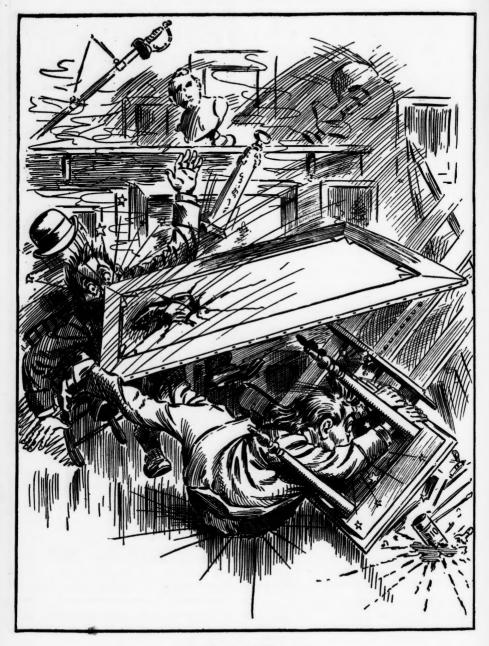
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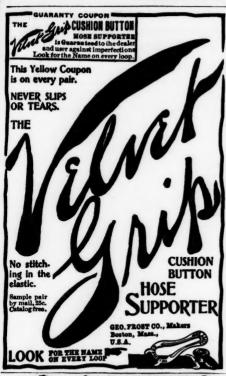
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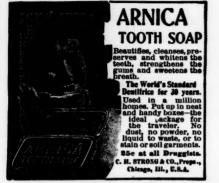
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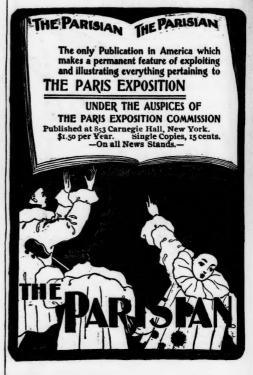
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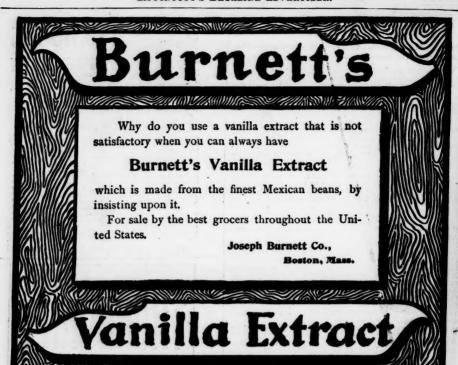
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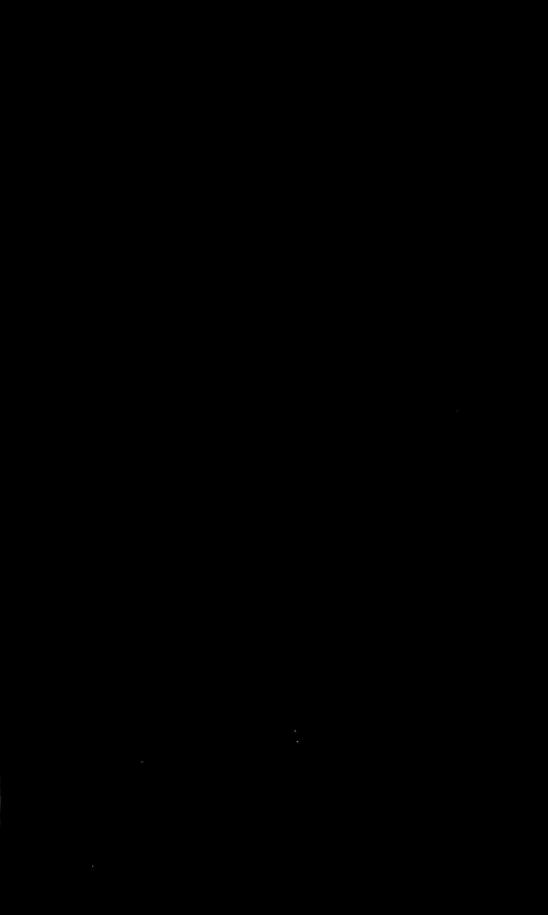
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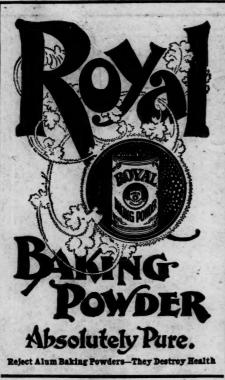
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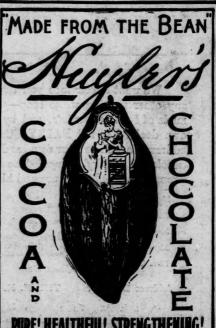
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